



*Chesterton school pupils with locomotive 1956*

110.45

Cambridge RAILWAYS Chronicle by Mike Petty

c.26.2 : railways

NOTE: these stories relate to Cambridge itself. For a more detailed abstract of articles about the whole of Cambridgeshire please see the Cambridgeshire Railways Scrapbook  
<https://archive.org/details/CambridgeshireRailwaysScrapbook>

Railway Traveller's Guide history      60 03 22

1845

After several abortive starts a railway finally arrives at Cambridge in 1845, the station having been sited far from the centre of the town because of University objections to the line coming within a mile of their buildings. An additional clause prohibited trains from stopping within three miles of Cambridge on Sundays. Although this restriction was not repealed until 1908 it had long ceased to be observed.

1849

A reader has sent a picture of a locomotive engine built by Headley Bros of the Eagle Foundry, Cambridge in 1849. It was a small single-tank affair with two big driving wheels, painted bright green and named the 'Eagle'. At first there was no tender, only a small place for the driver, though later it was extended to carry a saloon. It was intended for the use of the Eastern Counties Railway's engineer but its career was marred when in 1850 it ran over and killed the district superintendent. 30 08 19a

1863

A wooden island platform connected by footbridge & tunnel under the lines was added only to be abandoned during rebuilding work in 1863 which lengthened the original platform.

1886

In 1886 a new two-platform Station was planned but this would have involved taking part of Coldham's Common which Parliament refused to sanction.

**1888**

1888 09 14

Plans for Mill Road Bridge nearly ready [2.8]

1888 09 14

Proposed new Goods Yard, Mill Road [2,7]

1889 08 03

Sir – The Mill Road footbridge over the railway line was opened to the public on Monday August 3<sup>rd</sup> 1889. I was the last one to take the keys of the gates to the station – William Nelson. Sir - The iron footbridge over the railway on Mill Road had wooden steps and gave access to the open fields beyond it. In fact, so countrified was the area that when the Royal Standard was built it was known as 'Apthorpe's Folly' from William Apthorpe the brewer who built it. The bridge now stands on Coldham Common where it spans the Newmarket Line – H.D.C. 35 01 26

1892

Opposition to divert section of line across Coldham's Common [1,5]

1893

Great Eastern Railway Act empowers new station at Cambridge & diversion of the Newmarket line as trains crossing all main lines at station presents danger [1.6]

1893 02 11

Station improvements [1.15]

1896 04 29

Coldham's Lane bridge built & new track of railway opened [1.9]

1897

A fast train to London takes 1 hour 22 minutes & costs 10/- (50p); in 1947 it took 1 hour 13 minutes & cost 4s.7d (23p) [1.10]

1897 02 01

Propose new GER station – present station dangerous, extension to Mill Road, Coldham's Common site proposed, Hyde Park Corner possible 1897 02 01 p3

1897 07 05

The Cambridge employees of Messrs Rattee and Kett, Station-road, had their annual outing to Scarborough. The party, numbering upwards of 100, left Cambridge by special train (to which, by the courtesy of Mr Holditch, the G.E.R. station-master, three saloons had been attached for their convenience) at 5 a.m., Scarborough being reached at 11 a.m. Through the generosity of the firm refreshments were liberally supplied both going and returning.

1898 08 31

The securing of the Midsummer Common for the show grounds of the Barnum and Bailey's Circus, having been completed, they have found it necessary to make a change in a number of their plans for the visit to Cambridge. The large number of excursionists from the country districts who will be

attracted by the presence of the show will be thankful for the change. It will be possible to enjoy the evening show with comfort, in the consciousness that it is easy to catch the trains afterwards. The big show will arrive in Cambridge on four special trains, with a total of 74 railway cars. The unloading will be done in the G.E. railway yards, and the entire city of canvas, 14 tents in all, will be put up in the morning before the parade starts out. Every bit of the show is coming to Cambridge # c.76.2

1898 09 29

Henley Arthur Bedwell, a Cambridge piano and organ builder claimed £2 from the Great Eastern Railway for damages sustained by a piano and a case which had been considerably damaged by wet. The manager of the Cutter inn, Ely said he packed the piano before it was sent back. He took it to Ely station and deposited in a goods shed. James Merry, goods foreman at the station, gave evidence as to loading the piano safely on a truck. A tarpaulin was tied over it. There were some barrels of beer in the same wagon, but they were not leaking. Harold Pain, an optician, produced a register proving that there was no rain during the transit of the piano.

1898 10 27

The population of the town of Cambridge has increased very much during the past 10 years, especially in the Petersfield and Romsey town area. Up till 10 years ago the chancel of the present St Barnabas Church was the only place of worship in the extensive district. Mainly by reason of the enterprise of Mr Sturton in providing land for building purposes, the district became so large that it became necessary to carry out the building of the complete Church; this was done in 1887. The substitution by the Great Eastern Railway Company of a handsome bridge for the old level crossing in Mill Road gave a great impetus to building in what is now Romsey town and the church of ease of St Phillip's was established. Now the time has come for Romsey town to be raised to the status of an ecclesiastical Parish, with St Phillip's as the parish church

1898 12 28

A strange discovery was made on Boxing Day at the Cambridge railway station by a cleaner. It appears that in the performance of his ordinary duties he was sweeping the carriages of a London and North Western train working between Cambridge and Bletchley, when he came across a brown paper parcel concealed under the seat of a third class compartment. Suspicious of its contents, the man removed it to the cloak room. The parcel was opened without delay and discovered to contain the dead body of a newly born male child.

1899 07 05

The Great Eastern Railway Company has for many years been engaged in carrying the workpeople of East London to and from their work and Liverpool Street and Fenchurch Street stations every morning are thronged with the wage earners of East London. Now within a few miles of Cambridge Messrs Chivers have established a jam factory and in the fruit picking season employ an average of 8,000 people, most drawn from Cambridge. For their benefit the Great Eastern Railway has now provided trains to Histon, morning and night. These are of immense convenience to the fruit pickers and in putting them on the railway company has in promoting its own welfare promoted also that of Cambridge - 1899 07 05

1899 11 02

When residents in St Andrew's street, Cambridge, saw a procession of cabs passing onward "all mournful and slow" to the railway station the people knew that someone had been sent down from the University. From Emmanuel College a youth emerged and under a shower of rice made hurriedly for the cab waiting at the door. The driver, "Gentleman Joe" wore a tall hat draped with crape, and so did the drivers of some four cabs what followed. The hero of the hour entered the Great Northern Station, the train moving out to the strains of "Auld Lang Syne". Meanwhile the cabbies grove back to their respective stands. They were of more cheerful aspect on the return journey and each puffed a festive cigar.

1899 11 13

Cambridge has got a long railway station, but there would not have been an inch of standing room to spare on the platform if all the people who desired to get in had been permitted to do so. Shortly before noon the procession of Reservists arrived and from that time till the train left all was wild excitement. The difficulty was to get the men who were leaving away from their friends, and in the long run there was nothing for it but to effect something like a forcible separation. Eventually, amid vociferous cheering the train got away and the defenders of the country were fairly on their way to do the country's bidding

1899 11 14

Mr Richard Langford of James Street, Cambridge, has passed away within a fortnight of obtaining the great age of 100 years. He was early in life placed in a gang of lighters which plied between King's Lynn and Cambridge and acquired a gang of his own. For many years he brought coals to Cambridge until the railway was opened, when he retired.

## **1900**

1900 01 20

For the second time since the Boer ultimatum the consequences of war have been brought very close to Cambridge. This morning there was a second demonstration in which Town and Gown joined hands in a common feeling of respect for those who, though not compelled by laws to leave the old country, were nevertheless anxious to lend a hand in the war. Shortly after ten o'clock the special train steamed out of the siding, kisses were blown and the Volunteers who will represent Cambridge at the front were out of sight, but not out of mind 1900

1900 03 06

Sir – At present gates cross the railway line on Milton Road, Cambridge, and a sub-way is provided for vehicular traffic. After heavy rains it is flooded some feet deep and a few days ago the driver of a carriage containing an invalid lady found over five feet of water there, and no room to turn round. The invalid and her attendant had to sit up to their knees in water, and in their saturated clothes had to proceed to the Hospital. – Viator 00 03 06

1900 08 14

An accident happened at Cherry Hinton. The 8.55 passenger train was due, but the gates over the Cherry Hinton crossing remained closed; consequently the engine, which was travelling backwards, dashed into them with horrific force and smashed them to pieces. The head lamp on the engine was broken, but no other damage was done. The gatekeeper has been suspended 00 08 14 c

1900 08 15

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1901 01 17

For some time the Cambridge Borough Surveyor had hired a wharf in the L.N.W.R. railway yard, principally for the purposes of stone breaking. The rent had been £2 but the Company now proposed to increase it to £3 per annum. The surveyor considered it would be advantageous to continue the tenancy.

1901 01 29

Few spots in and around Cambridge have become more notorious for the number of fatalities which they yield than the vicinity of Barnwell Junction and the stretch of line between that point and the level crossing on the Chesterton side of the railway bridge which spans the Cam. And probably

nothing has ever surpassed in ghastliness the gruesome discovery made there during the early hours of Tuesday morning. The unfortunate victim was a telegraph linesman.  
Barnwell junction accident, p3 \*, inquest 31st p3

1901 02 12

As we tread the borders of the 20th century we wonder whether the people of the year 2001 will find the railway train be a thing of the past because they are using flying machines as a means of locomotion. Will the fact of sending a message along a wire be deemed romantic at that period or will the telegraph appear to them as old fashioned and romantic as the first efforts of telegraphy by means of wooden arms do to us. The romance of looking forward is to us not to be compared with that of looking back.

1901 04 09

The atmospheric conditions in Cambridge on Easter Monday were on the whole delightful and the people made the most of the opportunities for outdoor amusement and recreation. There was an increase of traffic on the Great Eastern Railway. Excursions were run to Hunstanton, 50 persons leaving, and 70 went to Yarmouth, 20 to Cromer, 20 to Lowestoft and 150 to London by excursions that day. Another excursion brought 362 persons from London to Cambridge.

1901 05 06

Today Cambridge formally recognises and honours the loyalty of her sons who have been at the war in South Africa. The arrival of the Volunteers at Cambridge Station was very quiet and orderly. There were no decorations but a barrier had been drawn across the platform & as time wore on the railway officials became more stringent as to whom they allowed within. There was excitement as a train was seen slowing steaming in with khaki-coloured arms and bronzed faces thrust out of the windows and in another minute the men were standing on the platform, after fifteen months' experience of war and travelling.

1901 06 13

Yarmouth Guardians received a report on the dissection of paupers' bodies. They had been sent to Cambridge by officials of the workhouse since 1881. Professor Macalister sent a cheque for £6 14s 6d for each body but only £5 10s 0d was really incurred for expenses. The railway charge for the carriage of a body was £4 6s.0d but the Master's clerk said it was £4 9s.0d and that he put the other 3s. in the poor box. £1 was paid for a coffin but he received 1s. from the undertaker. All the clerk had to do was to see the body was screwed down, go to the railway station and pay the charge. He said he gave the porters sixpence each but inquiry proved they only received a pint of beer

1901 07 08

About 100 employees of Messrs Rattee and Kett spent a most enjoyable day at the Crystal Palace, seeing the Naval and Military Exhibition being held there. The great feature was the stupendous Military Band Concert. The employees of Messrs Redding & Son spent an enjoyable day at Brighton; a saloon carriage was attached to the Great Northern Railway train which left Cambridge at 4.45 am. Messrs Scales and Robins employees enjoyed a combined sea and rail trip and journeyed from Lowestoft to Yarmouth by steamer

1901 11 26

A Chesterton lady, Miss A. Masterson of Humberstone Road, was among a number of passengers who underwent an alarming experience while travelling by the Central London Railway, which is better known as the "Twopenny Tube". A train was suddenly stopped as it was about to enter Marble Arch Station. The tunnel became filled with dense and suffocating smoke. Several ladies fainted and others became hysterical. People were rushing pell-mell from the front of the train, scrambling over seats to get out of danger. Then the lights went out. It was twenty minutes before the train moved back slowly. There was a terrible smell of burning flesh and it was learned that a gentleman had fallen in front of the train and been crushed to death.

1902 02 12

Cambridge Electric Supply Company reported that they would probably outgrow the present site, in Thompson's Lane. They had secured a site at Chesterton, situated at the side of the railway line so they would be able to bring coals into the yard and they had also arranged for the use of the river and the road. The site would not be required yet but as no other spot on the river was so placed they were justified in buying the land

1902 04 21

The King passed through Cambridge on his way from Sandringham to London. The special train steamed through at a slow pace. The king was plainly visible reading a daily paper. A barrier was thrown across the station where the London trains go out. A number of people assembled on that part of the platform which was open to the public, but there was no demonstration.

1903 03 23

A two-year-old baby boy was found on a seat on the Cambridge Railway Station platform. Nobody could be found to claim the youngster who was contentedly munching a bun and entirely oblivious to his surroundings. He was fairly well dressed but had no parcel containing extra clothes or anything that could lead to his identification. The Great Northern stationmaster's wife (Mrs Fenn) took charge of the little fellow and he was subsequently given into the charge of the police and removed to the Workhouse to await identification.

1903 07 30

Cambridge Commercial Traveller's Association submitted a petition to the Great Eastern Railway Company praying for an improved service. The want of a train between Cambridge and London which would permit business men to reach the City before 10 am is very badly felt and there is no return to Cambridge between 5.15 and 8.20 pm which causes great inconvenience. Such provision would render it possible for gentlemen engaged in business in London to reside in Cambridge, which at present is found impossible, owing to the absence of convenient trains. 03 07 30

1904 04 30

At midnight Friday, the driver of a goods train from Cambridge discovered that several of his trucks were on fire. He got to Audley End station as quickly as possible when it was found that a truck of straw, another containing corn, and also one loaded with mangolds had become ignited. The burning trucks were promptly shunted on to the Walden branch siding, and strenuous efforts were made to extinguish the flames. However the trucks of wheat straw was burnt out. The corn is somewhat damaged, and also the truck containing the mangolds

1904 07 09 c

Mr F.B. Kelly has retired as District Manager of the Great Northern Railway at Cambridge after 55 years' service. He began at Lincoln when the railway began to compete with a boat that used to ply between Lincoln and Boston. Instead of seeking to attract custom by providing a more comfortable means of travelling they decided that anything cheap, though nasty, would do. They provided fourth-class carriages which had neither seats nor covering and packed them in like so many sheep. He also recalls the better type of carriage that was modelled on the stage coach and remembers how before the introduction of vans luggage used to be piled on the top of the carriages and covered over with a sheet

1904 09 03

Children throw stones on trains from Mill Road bridge [2.15]

1904 11 11

Cement making has already become a very important Cambridge industry. Extensive new works are rapidly approaching completion and have made a great change in the landscape of Cherry Hinton. The pleasant path through the fields from the end of Mill Road is hardly recognisable now. It has been diverted to make room for a huge collection of buildings from which a new siding leads to the railway line close at hand. These are the Norman Cement Company's works

1905 02 25

It would appear as though the automobile is going to revolutionise transit in all departments and the next application is likely to be the railways. The Great Northern Railway Company have been allowing a motor manufacturing company to make experiments upon their lines with a petrol car as a conveyance over branch lines passing through sparsely-populated districts. It is being seriously considered whether the automobile carriage carrying a few passengers shall not supersede the ordinary locomotive-drawn train. The car with which experiments are being made ran into

1905 09 06

Sir – thousands of people in Romsey Town are anxious for a shorter route to the railway station. Some years ago they had a private path but this was closed; a shorter route, known as Coulson's Path, was also taken away and passengers have to go by the Devonshire Road. The erection of one of the old foot bridges, now lying useless, somewhere near Charles Street or David Street would be a boon to both railway and inhabitants – S. Hurrell. 05 09 06

1905 12 09

Cambridge Corporation's new Mill Road storeyard is nearing completion on land behind the Free Library. Here material for the repair and making of roads is stored, vehicles housed and mended and appliances for any contingency kept in readiness. It has a siding to the railway for granite or cement, an open shed for refuse vehicles and stables together with accommodation for two steam rollers. There are blacksmiths, carpenters and wheelwright's shops and a men's mess room 05 12 09a & b

1906 08 09

Cambridge station platform will be lengthened by 270 feet and widened with new awnings. The booking hall will be enlarged nearly three times, the waiting room, lavatories and parcels office doubled. A subway connecting the eastern side of the line with the town would be a convenience but only a small proportion of those people using it would be railway passengers. However the railway would allow a wayleave under their line to anybody who wishes to construct one. 06 08 09

1906 08 23

A woman of about 30 years of age journeyed to Cambridge to meet the man who was the author of her 'trouble'. While she was in the train alone the child was born but on arrival at the station she behaved with such extraordinary circumspection that none of the railway officials suspected anything unusual had occurred. Carrying a bundle wrapped in underlinen under her arm, this extraordinary woman walked the length of the platform, hailed a cab and asked to be driven to the Workhouse. There her strength gave way and she swooned on the floor with the new-born babe beside her. They are both doing well. 06 08 23

1907 01 03

A signalman at Cherry Hinton signal box experienced the agony of seeing his son killed before his eyes. While he was on duty his three-year-old lad toddled across the line to visit his father, just as a passenger train was approaching. Unable to leave his post and unable to prevent the accident, the father saw his son knocked down by the train. He was picked up, shockingly injured, and conveyed by the train to Cambridge station and from thence to Hospital but was dead before he arrived. 07 01 03b

1907 07 08

Sir – I should much like to live in Cambridge but am unable to do so because of its trains. If I could get to London before nine in the morning and return after 10.30 at night I could do so. There are numbers of commercial travellers and tradesmen who have to go to market who would live here and patronise whichever railway company gives this facility first. A route via Bedford would only take some 20 minutes longer and would be a great benefit. – Effigy. Two years ago the railway asked for the names of 10 people who would be regular passengers – but no names were forthcoming - Editor 07 07 08

1907 07 20

For some years the manufacture of Portland cement had been carried on in the district, but it is today that the new Saxon Portland Company is seriously undertaking the scientific manufacture of the product on a large commercial scale. One of the largest and most modern cement works in the kingdom is being erected on the Coldham Lane, Cambridge. Sidings have been connected with the railway capable of holding three trains of 20 trucks each. The buildings, rapidly approaching completion, include eight large cement kilns & an enormous building will provide storage for the manufactured cement. The works will be open by night and by day. The electric light will be extensively used and the current will be generated at the works.

1907 12 07

When the Cambridge station Night Inspector heard of a fire at Bishops Stortford he despatched telegrams summoning workers from their homes. A truck specially designed for the conveyance of the fire engine is always kept ready but the engine itself is kept unmounted, ready for local fires. Within an hour a special train comprising a locomotive, the fire-emergency truck and a brake van was thundering down the line as, on board, a little band of half-a-dozen men busied themselves with preparations for the grim contest that lay before them. 07 12 07

1908

Clause re trains not stopping on Sundays formally repealed (stopped before) [4.10]

1908 07 17

A shocking railway accident, resulting fatally, occurred at the Cherry Hinton level crossing. Two light engines were approaching and the gatekeeper, Mr West, being absent at the back of his house, his daughter was closing the gates. One easily shut but before she had time to close the second the engines were upon her and she was thrown to the ground. The unclosed gate was badly damaged. The gatekeeper was 71 years of age and on duty all hours. For the last four weeks he had been called at four o'clock in the morning and was on duty till 10.30 pm. CWN 08 07 17 p5

1908 09 18

There will be considerable reorganisation at Cambridge station following the agreement between the London and North Western and the Midland Railways. There will now be a combined staff for goods, cartage and passenger traffic and one town office will do the business of the two. But passengers taking ordinary tickets to London by the Great Eastern Railway still have the privilege of returning by the Great Northern, or vice versa. CWN 08 09 18

1908 12 04

Cambridge railway station – major article from Railway Magazine – 08 12 04

1909 01 22

The line near Cambridge station was blocked by a collision between two goods trains. One engine and four trucks were derailed and the goods thrown in all directions. One was completely overturned and its contents scattered over the line while others loaded with granite had the sides ripped open. The accident happened under Mill Road bridge where a crowd of spectators watched the arduous task of clearing the line 09 01 22

1909 04 02

Improvement work has started at Cambridge railway station to provide better facilities for branch trains. But other work to enlarge the booking, parcel and lavatory accommodation, to widen the main platform by twelve feet, provide another exit for parcel traffic and erect another colonnade in the yard is a task of considerable magnitude and will not be undertaken at once. 09 04 02

1909 04 09

The stationmaster of Barnwell Junction found the ticket office had been entered, the till broken open and cash and stamps stolen. The burglar entered the waiting room where he obtained a poker and



forced the booking office window. After smashing the till he visited the stationmaster's office and made a meal of bread and cheese. 09 04 09

1909 05 28

A shocking accident occurred at Cambridge Railway Station when George Meade of Shepreth fell in front of an engine and received such injuries as necessitated the amputation of both his legs. It was fully twenty minutes before he could be extricated and removed to Addenbrooke's Hospital 09 05 28

1909 10 22

Shoppers had the unusual opportunity of seeing an aeroplane in the streets of Cambridge. It was an all-British monoplane invented and designed by Jack Humphreys, founder of the British Aeroplane Syndicate and one-time Cambridge resident. He had worked day and night at Wivenhoe to get the machine ready for the Blackpool meeting and had hoped to put it on the train there. Instead he had it towed to Cambridge but missed the turning at Station Road and had to drive through the narrow central streets until he could get back. A crowd of railway officials, crossing-sweepers and daintily-dressed ladies quickly clustered around it. CWN 09 10 22

## **1910**

1910 04 01

Easter 1910 will be long remembered for its delightful holiday weather. The religious services both on Friday and Sunday were remarkably well attended and on Friday evening a large audience attended a performance of the 'Messiah' at the Guildhall. Many Cambridge people went out of town by train. Yarmouth, Lowestoft and Cromer were the most popular watering places, Hunstanton attracting fewer people than usual. There were scores of cyclists and motorists on the roads, all very cheerful in spite of the dust nuisance. The Territorials held a parade for 250 men and the 1st Eastern General Hospital were busy training at Haslingfield. A miniature rifle range was opened at the Working Men's Institute in Fitzroy Street. 10 04 01a

1910 10 28

Cambridge station railway worker decapitated by train – 10 10 28d

1911 08 04

The Great Eastern Railway says that despite the increase in motor travelling, which renders wealthy people independent of railway trains, the first-class returns show a considerable increase. The third-class returns are also up which is more surprising for the development of tubes and trams in the London suburbs means keen competition. But the second-class passenger seems to be gradually dying out and on many lines has been abolished altogether 11 08 04

1911 08 18

The railway strike has begun and its effects are impossible to say. A complete stoppage would paralyse the trade of the country. Meat would be unobtainable and flour and corn exhausted in a week leaving cities starving for bread. No doubt road and river traction would bring some mitigation but fruit and fish would leap to famine prices and without coal no gas or electricity can be produced. Mills, factories and workshops would be closed down for lack of power and the great majority of people become dependent upon public relief. 11 08 18e

1911 08 18

The effects of the rail strike are not seriously felt in Cambridge. All trains are running though supplies are considerably delayed with shortages in butter, bacon and petrol. Representatives of the Amalgamated Society of Railway Servants have been in town but only a very few local employees are society men. Cambridge Station is looked upon as a 'fat job'; guards, porters and platform hands know when they are well off and there are plenty of reserve men to take the places of any who come out. 11 08 18h

1911 08 25

Had the railway strike not been settled on Saturday there is little doubt that nearly 100 of the men employed at Cambridge station would have come out. The GER trains ran as usual and the London and North-Western Railway will give double pay to the men connected with the movement and handling of traffic who have remained loyally at their posts. Although no actual disturbances were feared the Chief Constable very properly took the precaution of stopping all leave in case of need. 11 08 25f

1911 11 03

The Cambridge stationmaster, Mr Holdich, was presented with a gold watch and a cheque for 100 guineas on his retirement. When he'd started with the Eastern Counties Railway in the 1850s the rolling stock was in a wretched state. He'd ridden in a carriage with no roof, others had a roof but no windows. In 1894 he'd been appointed to Cambridge, dealing with Masters of Colleges, learned Professors, royalty and other distinguished personages. Then there was the Royal Show. But they'd got through all right. 11 11 03d

1911 11 24

John Stanley, poulterer of Peas Hill sued the G.E.R. Company for damages sustained in the carriage of 84 ducklings and three geese from Liverpool Street to Cambridge. They were to have been sent by passenger train the same day. But instead they were taken on to Doncaster. He made numerous inquiries but it was not until 9pm that the birds arrived at the station but the GER could not deliver them until Monday, by which time they would have been bad. But he had an old contract that said the goods were sent at his risk and he lost his case. 11 11 24f

1912 02 16

The biggest fire seen in Cambridge for nine years broke out at Clement Johnson's rope, sack and tarpaulin factory facing the railway station. The building was completely gutted. The walls which must have been very strongly built when the factory was erected nearly 50 years ago, remained intact, but everything inside - sacks, ropes, twine, tarpaulins and marquees - was totally destroyed. Mr Johnson knew nothing about the catastrophe until he left a train and walked out of the station when he saw the whole factory ablaze 12 02 16f & 16a

1912 03 01

A slight mishap occurred at the Milton level crossing when the down gate was smashed by the 6.05 pm train from Cambridge to St Ives. Beyond the smashing of the gate and some slight damage to the brakes, due probably to the sudden stopping of the train, no damage was done. Immediately before this Chivers' work-girls train had passed on the up line. The gateman said that earlier he had let through some sheep and the gates were securely fastened. But the down gate became opened in some way and was run into by the train. This is the fourth accident at this crossing in the last three years. 12 03 01f

1912 06 07

When retiring Stationmaster, George Kimm, first came to Cambridge the Superintendent's office was on the old island platform that stood opposite the present platform before it was lengthened. There was a bridge by which passengers reached it but all luggage was transferred by means of a trolley and then shouldered by porters to a cab or van for conveyance to its destination. This caused very great delay, especially at the beginning or end of term, and it was largely for the convenience of the University that the present long single platform was made. It was opened in October 1863. He has seen the opening of the Haverhill and Sudbury line amongst others, welcomed Royalty. Stretham fen accident described: the balance-weight of the engine of an express train fell off just as a down express was approaching, and, the weight rolling on to the line, threw the down train into the dyke. A number of people were injured. Litigation followed and the company were found liable 12 06 07k

1912 07 19

An important change in railway administration means that the whole of the G.E.R. and G.N.R. work at Cambridge station will now be carried out by the Great Eastern staff. All passengers will obtain their tickets in the central booking hall while all parcel traffic will now be dealt with in the former Great Northern booking hall which will provide cloak room accommodation as well. A total of 50 G.N.R. men will be found new employment, some as far away as Doncaster or St Neots. 12 06 28i

1913 01 31

Most of the passengers had left the G.N.R. train from King's Cross at Cambridge station when an official noticed a gentleman, apparently asleep. He opened the carriage door and gently shook him by the knee. As he did so he was startled to see a revolver lying on the floor of the carriage and a small trickle of blood. Examination showed that the passenger was dead, apparently from a bullet wound in the head. The body was identified as that of Longstanton man. The village stationmaster was told to break the news to his wife. The news caused great consternation in the area 13 01 31 p12 CIP

1913 05 09

There was a huge increase in heavy motor traffic carrying goods that had previously gone by train. In prosperous Cambridge there were 26 heavy motor lorries, including the motor-'buses, and 21 motor drays. Most of their running was done on the county roads at a fairly high speed. It was important to have good roads, not only for the ordinary motor-cars but for the heavy commercial vehicles, because they helped to promote industry in various parts of the county, councillors were told. 13 05 09 p09 CIP

1913 05 30

Suffragettes attempted to blow up a railway crossing gate at Granhams Road, Shelford. The gatekeeper found a treacle tin with a bootlace through the lid connecting with a long red squib inside. It was surrounded by cotton wool soaked in oil and lumps of charcoal. On the outside was written 'Votes for Women'. There is little doubt it was a genuine article that could have set fire to the gate had the lighted lace not gone out. It was immersed in a bucket of water. Rumours said that two strange women had been seen near the site 13 05 30 p11 CIP

1913 09 26 p7

Railway shed fire

1913 12

Two killed at Coldham's Lane crossing [1.8]

1913 12 26

Concern was expressed about the petroleum tanks on the Great Eastern Railway Company's yard in Devonshire Road. If there were an explosion all the station would be blown down and Tenison Road as well. There had been great trepidation when Mr Clement Johnson's sack factory caught fire because of the danger of the wind blowing sparks towards the tanks. But the Inspector of Explosives had examined them and nothing short of wilful determination would set them alight. It was petroleum, not explosive oil gas. The tanks in the ground would not be affected even if a man lit a pipe whilst pumping it out from the tank 13 12 26 p3

1914 06 04

Trains to Cambridge p5

1914 07 02

Railwaymen's union meeting 14 07 02

1914 07 10

Cambridge Voluntary Aid Detachments and Red Cross held an exercise at Newnham College. It assumed severe fighting had been going on in Norfolk and a large number of casualties had been sent

to the First Eastern General Hospital. When another train load of wounded arrived they received orders to convert Sidgwick Hall into a temporary hospital where eleven beds were provided and patients were treated for crushed hands and fractured tibia. Other nurses were prepared splints and bandages and a septic ward was set up 14 07 10 p4

1914 08 07

How Cambridge Mobilised. Throughout the first two or three days of the week Cambridge residents experienced the feeling of tension which has been typical of the country. Large crowds of townspeople have assembled outside newspaper offices during the week, in order to learn the latest war news, and such anxiety has not been displayed since the dark days of the South African War. Until the early hours of Wednesday morning, large numbers of Cambridge people paraded the streets in the hope of hearing some news as to the reply of Germany to the British ultimatum, and when the intelligence of war with Germany became known, the tension of the previous few days was partially relieved. Late on Sunday, and early on Monday morning, Cambridge members of the Naval Reserve received notices calling upon them to report themselves at their respective headquarters. There was a large number of Naval Reservists in Cambridge, and the men immediately proceeded to Portsmouth, Chatham and other important naval centres. While the effect of the withdrawal of the naval men did not have so drastic an effect as the orders had in coast towns, it was rather surprising to find that in Cambridge there were so many ex-naval men and Marines who had settled down to landmen's work in the inland town. The calling up of the Army Reserve had an even wider operation, employees in colleges, railwaymen, policemen, postal officials, Vanmen, etc., abandoning their civil occupations at the call of the State. The railway station presented an animated scene, hundreds of Reservists arriving from all parts of the town and district and proceeding to their regimental headquarters. The local Staff officers of the Territorial Force also responded to the summons, and rejoined their regiments. 14 08 07 CIPof

1914 08 14

Cambridge Yeomanry marched from the stores in Panton Street to the railway station where they loaded their baggage into luggage vans. A number of horses were requisitioned in the station yard, including a cab horse which was taken out of the cab, unharnessed, then placed in a horse van. A butcher's horse was handed over. A country trap came into the yard to convey sad tidings to three of the men that their father had died. It was impossible for them to return home and they had to remain with their comrades. Finally a special train including vans loaded with machine guns and ammunition pulled out while the crowd sang 'Rule Britannia' 14 08 14 p6

1914 09 04

The train with wounded from the front was delayed. Rooms on the Great Northern platform were converted into wards for serious cases before being taken to hospital. Outside a fleet of motor cars and tradesmen's vans converted to ambulances were ready to take the men to the First Eastern Hospital now at Trinity College. It was not easy to lift the badly-wounded men out of the carriages but stretchers were placed on luggage trolleys and wheeled slowly along the platform. There were tears in the eyes of onlookers 14 09 04 p7

1914 09 25

Wounded Soldiers Return. About five weeks ago, thousands of British soldiers, summoned from all parts of the United Kingdom, were under canvas at Cambridge in readiness for departure to the Front. Their destination was unknown, and it was naturally surmised by the men that they would be going to Belgium. Yesterday afternoon some of these soldiers returned to Cambridge, maimed in some cases and badly wounded in other cases. The ambulance train arrived at Cambridge about 5 p.m., and contained 130 wounded men from infantry, cavalry and artillery regiments. In 30 cases the soldiers were unable to walk, and were carried from the train on stretchers by the local members of the Voluntary Aid Detachments, and thence to Trinity College, the headquarters of the 1st Eastern General Hospital (T). Included in the wounded were men of the East and West Yorks. Regiments, Royal Fusiliers, R.H.A., Norfolks and Suffolks, and a large proportion of them were men of the Brigade which was encamped in Cambridge recently.

1914 09 25

Nearly 200 wounded soldiers arrived at Cambridge in two specially-fitted ambulance trains. They had come straight off the hospital ship that had brought them from France; some had been travelling for four days. They lay on beds arranged in two tiers along the sides of long compartments and were carried on stretchers to the ambulance vans waiting outside the station. Quite a large crowd waiting patiently for several hours to see them arrive and give them a cheer as they were brought out.

1914 09 25

Wounded Soldiers. — About 200 wounded soldiers arrived in Cambridge in the early hours of Wednesday morning after a long and tiring journey by rail and sea from the front. There were comparatively few Cambridge people at the railway station when the special trains arrived, and with all possible speed under the circumstances the wounded men were conveyed to the East Anglian Divisional Hospital at Trinity College.

1914 10 23

Railway Tragedy. — A fatality on the Great Eastern Railway line at Cambridge on Saturday, when a platelayer named William James Thurlow was knocked down by a truck while engaged in oiling points near Mill Road Bridge. Thurlow was working with a man named Jack Andrews, who was also knocked down and injured. Thurlow died after admission to hospital, and at an inquest the jury returned a verdict of "accidental death." 14 10 23 CIPof

1915 02 05

Presentation. On Thursday a presentation was made to Mr. W. B. Allen, for ten years London and North-Western and Midland Stationmaster at Cambridge. The gifts consisted of an easy chair, a case of pipes and a tin of tobacco. A welcome was extended to Mr. Bradley, the successor to Mr. Allen 15 02 05 CIPof

1915 02 05

Well-known G.E.R. Stationmaster. It is with deep regret that we record the death of Mr. John Ablitt, the Gt. Eastern Railway stationmaster at Cambridge, which occurred at his residence. Morecambe House, Mill Road, on Thursday. The news of his demise will be received with universal regret throughout the whole of the Gt. Eastern system. Mr. Ablitt was in his 58th year. At the age of 21, he was appointed relief Stationmaster in the London district, and when Huntingdon joint railway station was opened, he took up duties there as stationmaster. He was afterwards transferred to Shelford, where he remained for 10 years, proceeding to Hunstanton (two years), St. Ives (two years), and Wisbech (six years) as stationmaster. In 1911 he secured the appointment at Cambridge railway station. 15 02 05 CIPof

1915 02 19

New Stationmaster. The vacancy caused at the Cambridge Station (G.E.R.) by the death of Mr. J. S. Ablitt has been filled by the appointment (made by Mr. Win. C. May, the Chief Traffic Manager of the G.E.R.) of Mr. Frederick Randall, Stationmaster at Ely. Mr. Randall, who this week took up his duties as stationmaster at Cambridge, has been in the service of the company for 28 years. He succeeded Mr. Bedford (now District Superintendent at Ipswich) as stationmaster at Ely in 1911. By his large and varied experience in the practical working of a railway, he is particularly well-fitted to discharge the responsible duties which the management of so important a junction will devolve upon him. Cambridge is regarded, as the most difficult to work of the company's provincial stations 15 02 19 CIPof

1915 09 03

The Fire Brigade received three calls to borough fires during the past week. In the early hours of Wednesday morning they were called to a serious outbreak in Fitzroy Street, and on the following day they were called upon to pay two visits to the London and North-Western Railway, where an engine shed had caught fire. 15 09 03

1915 11 17

Trumpington VTC on duty guarding railway bridge – photo -15 11 17b

1916 02 21

Wounded Arrive. Another heavy convoy of wounded arrived on Saturday night. The train, which steamed in about 8 o'clock, contained 107 cot cases and 93 sitting cases, 200 in all. The work was smartly carried out by Cambs. 13 V.A.D., assisted by members of Fulbourn detachment. The work was supervised by Commandant Percy Alger, and the train was unloaded in an hour and 20 minutes

1916 03 29

Sidney Frederick Lofts, aged 19, of Thoday Street, Cambridge, was engaged in shunting operations on the G.E.R. at Barnwell Junction when he was knocked down by an up express. The down express train had just passed, and this Lofts had noticed approaching. In avoiding it, however, he did not notice the other train. A motor ambulance was telephoned for and obtained from the military hospital, the man being taken to Addenbrooke's Hospital. Here it was found necessary to amputate both legs. 16 03 29 CIPof

1916 07 26

Stationmaster Honoured. – All Cambridge will join in extending heartiest congratulations to Mr. A. Peacocke, the new stationmaster at Cambridge, upon the honour conferred upon him by His Majesty the King, who has graciously awarded him the Royal Victorian Medal in recognition of long and faithful personal service rendered during the period he was travelling inspector in charge of the Royal train on the G.E.R.'s system. Although Mr. Peacocke only took over the duties of stationmaster at Cambridge at the beginning of the present month, he was well-known in the town, having, up to two years ago, resided in Mill Road for upwards of 15 years. The presentation was made at Buckingham Palace last Friday

1916 10 11

Great Eastern Railway campaign for egg and poultry development; demonstration train with models of poultry houses, hatching and rearing. Other branches of agriculture might follow – 16 10 11e

1916 12 13

Temperance Worker. His many friends in Cambridge and district have learned with considerable regret of the pending departure of Mr. Horace Brown, the known temperance worker and advocate, a regret which is shared by Town, County and University residents who have, in business matters, been brought into contact with him. Mr. Horace Brown has been a member of the Cambs. Band of Hope Union Executive Committee, representing the Eastern Division for the past three years, whilst he took a leading part in the Band of Hope pageants which were presented at Cambridge with so much success, his role being respectively Oliver Cromwell and the Mayor in "Stourbridge Fair". He has been in the employ of the Midland and L. and N.W. Railways for 17 years and during the past ten years has been in charge of the joint inquiry office at Market Hill, Cambridge.

1916 12 27

Christmas Railway traffic. — Altogether this year the Christmas traffic on the G.E.R. has been slacker than usual at Cambridge. There was, in the early part of last week, a good deal of passenger traffic, particularly among munition workers and soldiers. The general public, evidently responding to the appeal made to them, did not travel as in previous years. The extra trains on Sunday, however, were well filled. There were fewer passengers than usual, and the pressure on this department therefore was not so great as in previous years.

1919 07 16

Railwaymen commemorate staff who died – 19 07 16d, photos – 19 07 23l

1919 10 01

Rail Strike. The action of the N.U.R. Executive in forcing on the country, without warning, a national railway strike, bound up as it is with so many evil consequences and endangering the country's food supply, met with universal condemnation in Cambridge, as indeed it has throughout the British Isles. The situation is being met with calmness and fortitude. Cambridge railway station went to sleep on Friday night at the behest of the N.U.R. Goods traffic and perishable articles were held up, cattle suffered similarly and the mere man in the street was faced with the necessity of arranging his own transport if he wished to get home during the week-end. Four or five passenger trains were handled at Cambridge on Saturday. About 90 per cent of the men are out. A few trains have been run daily during the week. The Divisional Superintendent of Operations said a large number of Cambridge civilians had volunteered for service on the railway. The strike affected the gas supply and postal services and food rations were reduced to the following amounts: Meat 1s. 8d. worth per-week, bacon 6 ozs. sugar 8 ozs. butter 1 oz, margarine 4 ozs, lard 2 ozs. An old lady walked ten miles on Saturday to fetch margarine. Coal deliveries were restricted to deliveries of one cwt. 19 10 01b

1919 10 08

Strike scenes – Royal Engineers arrive in readiness; Milk dump at Cattle Market; Mass meeting of railwaymen – photos – 19 10 08c

1919 10 08

Railway Strike Ends,—The railway strike terminated on Sunday after an existence of nine days. Speaking generally, Cambridge felt but little ill effect from the national railway stoppage. Volunteers and loyal employees carried on a skeleton passenger service and voluntary effort in connection with road transport proved an invaluable asset in the movement of food supplies for the community. Travellers were incommoded, the public generally showed annoyance and anxiety in turn, and the man in the street exercised a Briton's privilege of "grousing" and carrying on the best he could, Cambridge railway employees returned to work on Monday, and about 8 a.m. 500 of the strikers marched to the station to report for duty. Others arrived in the course of the day, but owing to some misunderstanding in connection with the re-instatement of certain labour, the goods operatives declined to resume work. A deputation waited upon the local railway authorities and subsequently returned to the strike headquarters in Devonshire Road. Here the goods men were told to report for work next morning, the difficulties having been overcome. The men received the instruction with general pleasure, and one enthusiast called for cheers for the "brothers" who had settled the matter. A member of deputation discountenanced any form of demonstration, and the men dispersed quietly 19 10 08 CIPof [1.18] 19 10 08g

1919 10 15

Scenes during railway strike – lorries, traction engine, milk churn in motorcycle sidecar – photos – 19 10 15c

1919 11 05

"Our Jimmy" at Cambridge. The Rt Hon. J. H. (Jimmy) Thomas, P.C., M.P., visited Cambridge on Sunday and received a cordial welcome from railwaymen. He was met at the station by an enthusiastic crowd, who hauled his Carriage through the streets of the town, and in the afternoon the Guildhall was crowded when Mr. Thomas, introduced to the gathering as "Our Jimmy," gave an address. He referred to the future of the railwayman's union from the political and industrial standpoints, and spoke of the strain which he underwent during the railway strike, coming as it did upon five years of war-time anxieties. – 19 11 05a photo – 19 11 05c

1919 12 10

GER motor service between Cambridge & London, 30 huge lorries operating each day – 19 12 10e

**1920**

1920 05 31

Coldham's Lane signal box destroyed by fire - CDN 20 05 31

1920 06 17

Railway accident station; wagon lifter crushed

1920 07 22

Train crashes into buffers at station and mounted platform, front came to stop short distance from station buildings; platform ploughed up for some yards – 20 07 22

1920 07 28

Railway station accident – engine mounted the platform, no injuries – Ch 20 07 28a

1920 09 01

First post-war excursion train from Cambridge to Gt Yarmouth – photos – 20 09 01

1920 11 24

Railway station fatal accident – Melkjohn crushed between buffers – Ch 20 11 24b

1920 12 08

W.H. Smith dinner staff includes J.F. Ballinger, bookstall manager at Cambridge station – memories – Ch 20 12 08c

1921 04 06

Miners; strike crisis; railwaymen decide against strike, passenger trains cancelled; emergency declared, lighting restricted, coal stocks controlled – 21 04 06b

1921 05 04

Rumours that University end term early due to miners' strike discounted; residents supply coal to allow essential services; railwaymen's' guaranteed week suspended – 21 05 04b

1921 10 21

Man killed on railway at Marriott's crossing near station; need of bridge for 1,000 allotment holders – 21 10 19h

1921 11 30

G.E.R. staff new club house – photos – 21 11 30a,b

1921 12 10

death of 'Crutchy' Newman, boot cleaner Cambridge station [2.22]

1922 01 25

Great Eastern Railway Cambridge staff photo – 22 01 25a

1922 05 06

The local Labour and Co-operative Parties were well represented on Parker's Piece on Saturday when a May Day Demonstration was held. The proceedings commenced with a procession which marched in the following order: Railway Silver Band, officers of the party, banner of the A.S.L.E. and F., Co-operative banner and party, smaller unions and women's sections, Cherryhinton band, builders' banner and banner of the N.U.R.

1922 05 13

Bencro timetable indicators at station giving details of platforms etc [2.20]

1922 07 03

A glance at the huge entries in all sections of the Royal Show will give one some idea of the heavy burden imposed on the Railway Company, and the colossal task of arranging for the distribution of



traffic. The G.E.R. has built unloading docks situated at the Trumpington signal-box on the Long-road, Cambridge, where there is also another entrance to the Show ground. The work of unloading machinery and materials has been in progress since May 25th and considerably more than 2,000 tons will have been handled before the closing date for delivery. The intensive period will be when the livestock are received. About sixty special trains have been booked to arrive commencing at 3.40am on Saturday morning.

1923 01 01

Until grouping in 1923 Cambridge served by 4 independent companies - Gt Eastern which owned station & most things around it, Gt Northern from Kings Cross, London & North Western from Bletchley & Midland Railway from Kettering; LMS & LNER only came it 1st Jan 1923  
[87 05 21]

1923 03 03

First LNER engine at Cambridge [2.19]

1923 07 28

The offer of the London and North Eastern Railway Company in connection with the acquisition of the site of the old Newmarket railway line for the purpose of linking up Cherry Hinton road with Mill road, Cambridge, led to a good deal of discussion at the town council. For many years they had tried to get the company to come to terms, so that they could join the Rock Estate with Romsey town. The line was the key of the situation, and there were great possibilities of development on that side of the town. Mill Road too was strangled at present. Councillor Ambrose hoped the negotiations would be conditional on some promise of a bridge or railway for the people to get to the station from the Rock estate 23 07 28

1923 08 24

The staff of the Cambridge division of the L. & N.E. Railway gathered to show their appreciation on the retirement of Mr Frederick Harradine after nearly half a century. He entered the service in 1875 as a porter at Cambridge station and two years later became a single line pilot on the old Newmarket line. In 1880 he went to Shelford as a signalman and later transferred to Ely. Returning to Cambridge he was made a divisional inspector. One of his duties was to be in attendance after any serious mishap. He was the best known railwaymen in the division, if not on the railway.

1923 12 08

Fatal railway accident, Barnwell 23 12 08

1924 01 21

The railway strike has now begun, and reduced services are everywhere being run. No Cambridge locomotive man has taken an engine out of the sheds this morning, said W Few, secretary of the local branch of ASLEF at their headquarters, the Kingston cafe, Mill road. "The whole of our members, with the exception of 2, have ceased to work and if any driver in the NUR of whom there are 20 at Cambridge, signs on duty, there is no firemen to work with him". Tomorrow a large covered-in motor charabanc will leave the Ortona depot for London King's Cross at 8.30. The return fare is 12s.6d. 24 01 21

1924 02 10c

As a motor lorry, owned by Mr Parnell of Stretham and laden with 500 cans of petrol was approaching the Milton railway level crossing at a very slow speed the driver found the gates were closed to allow trains to pass. He applied his brakes, but they would not act and the lorry, which carried a very heavy load, smashed through the nearest gate, and stopped with the back part blocking the line. A coal train was approaching from Histon and a light engine from Chesterton Junction and quick action was necessary to avoid a serious accident. Gatekeeper Ernest Carter seized some fog signals and was able to stop the coal train and similar action taken by Patrol-Leader F.B. Pearson. The

line was blocked for over an hour by which time the lorry was, after a small repair, able to proceed on the journey.

1925 01 21

Certain alterations are to be made in the railway station at Cambridge. The L.N.E.R. propose to extend the main line platforms at each end so that the whole of long trains may be accommodated. The goods yards on the Cherry Hinton side are to be re-arranged and extended for the storage of carriages. Up to the present the old Newmarket line had been used but this is being handed over to Jesus College and the Corporation in connection with the building of the new arterial road from Cherry Hinton to Romsey Town 25 01 21

1925 09 07

Enthusiastic scenes marked the close of the Brass Band Contest in Cambridge Guildhall, which was won by the Cambridge Railway Silver Prize Band, the only local competitors. When the result was announced there was a furore of applause from the large audience present, and the bandsmen themselves momentarily lost their heads in their enthusiasm. The dignity of the large hall, which had rung for well-nigh two hours with the blare of brass instruments was quite forgotten. Hats were thrown high into the air and trombones and cornets waved to delighted friends among the audience.

1925 12 07

The advent of Father Christmas in Cambridge marked the approach of the festive season. He entered the town by means of the railway line. Crowds of young and old alike assembled outside the station and as the train steamed in a vision of scarlet and white, with a long white flowing beard, was seen at the window. The coach that awaited his arrival might have featured in the pages of some Hans Andersen's story with his coachman resplendent in his green and gold livery, a footman in blue, & two trumpeters attired in old gold facings and velvet breeches. To the sound of a fanfare of trumpets and the strains of the band he started on a triumphal tour of the town. On his approach to his temporary home at Heyworth's stores in Burleigh Street he was officially welcomed to 'Treasure Island'

1926 01 11

Cambridge Railway Clerks' Association annual dinner heard of the serious commercial encroachment which road transport is making upon the railways. It was entirely unfair that railway companies should have their business taken away from them by this new form of transport. The country would have to make up its mind whether it was going to have an efficient railway service or an inefficient, anaemic railway system hampered by this new form of competition with which it was unable to compete. Railwaymen were getting very restless about this question

1926 02 26

Sir – as a business man obliged to use the railways I wish to draw attention to the lack of punctuality of trains from the St Ives branch at Cambridge station. The 8.25 pm is invariably anything from a quarter to half-an-hour late, generally waiting ten minutes at Mill Road bridge whilst room is being found to run up to the platform. There is a rumour that the Ortona Motor Bus Company is shortly linking up with the National Bus Company at St Ives. The railway companies grumble about road transport competition, but it is their own fault and they have a remedy by being more punctual with the passenger service – H.G. Parker 26 02 26

1926 05 08

Cambridge station looked exceptionally bright this morning. Undergraduates in gaily coloured blazers added colour to the scene. The train services are gradually improving and great keenness had been shown on the part of undergraduates in bringing down supplies from London for the Station refreshment room. Tilly, the popular little tea shop girl, remarked while serving hot coffee and doughnuts to hungry undergraduates that she had never seen such cheerful and plucky workers as the volunteers who visited her counter during the General Strike.

1926 10 30

Cambridge Borough Surveyor submitted four schemes for the lay-out of land at the Cattle Market. The site comprised 11½ acres and was purchased about 1884 from Jesus College. The west side was used for vehicles of those attending the market, the east side was partly used for allotments and the question had arisen of developing part for conveniences, a free library and an abattoir, which was most important. The Railway Company wanted to provide up and down platforms at the station. It was unlikely the bridge would be widened for railway traffic was decreasing.

1927 03 02

Tragedy on line, p5 – 27 03 23 inquest 24<sup>th</sup> p5

1928 12 05

A passenger train travelling from March to Cambridge at over 40 mph crashed through one of the level crossing gates at Milton during dense fog. A motor lorry was practically on the rails. The engine driver appears to have been ignorant of the accident until he stopped some distance from the gates to await a signal. He then sent the fireman back to see what had happened. The passengers were unaware of any mishap. The Milton gates seem to be ill-fated. Numerous similar accidents have occurred there.

1929 08 17

Big Cambridge fire – sheds and railway trucks destroyed at Hills Road – 29 08 17

## **1930**

1930 04 28

The railway came to Cambridge in 1845 and was carried onwards to Ely by a trestle bridge; this was replaced by a low girder bridge until April 1930 when crowds descended to witness its replacement by a much larger and stronger bridge. The operation was a spectacular one, commencing at midnight engineers worked in the light of white acetylene flames to cut the steelwork in the centre of the old bridge and remove the track at either end. It was then raised on hydraulic jacks before being removed. Then the new bridge which had already been erected alongside was carefully moved into place, the lines reconnected and all was ready for trains to run again. 30 04 28 [2.1]

1930 05

Most up-to-date engines displayed at station to raise money for Addenbrooke's Hospital building appeal [2.2]

1930 09 19

A reader has sent a picture of a locomotive engine built by Headley Bros of the Eagle Foundry, Cambridge in 1849. It was a small single-tank affair with two big driving wheels, painted bright green and named the 'Eagle'. At first there was no tender, only a small place for the driver, though later it was extended to carry a saloon. It was intended for the use of the Eastern Counties Railway's engineer but its career was marred when in 1850 it ran over and killed the district superintendent. 30 08 19a

1930 10 09

The King and Queen will experience a sense of regret at the retirement of Inspector John Harrison of St Philip's Road, Cambridge. He has been Royal inspector since 1916 and was on the Royal train which took their majesties to Sandringham at the weekend. He remembers one occasion when he saw assembled on Wolferton station two kings, five queens, two princes and two princesses. Inspector G. Goddard, also of Cambridge, will succeed him. 30 10 09 & b

1930 11 14

Great anxiety is being felt by Cambridge's 2,000 railway employees over the Companies drastic proposals on rates of pay and conditions of service. The tobacco and other luxury trades were affected at the time they accepted a reduction in wages to ease the companies' financial difficulties temporarily

but this would have a serious impact on the spending power of a large number of relatively high-salaried men. Coming at a time when trade enterprise in Cambridge is approaching its zenith and the University is being appealed to for commercial support the prospects may be regarded with concern. 30 11 14

1930 11 22

Cambridge Co-operative Society opened a new bakery in Sleaford Street equipped with the most modern machinery. 500 sacks of flour a week arrive from their own private railway siding close by. They are lifted to the third floor and the flour passes through a series of automatic machines which mix and knead it into dough that is baked in steam-heated ovens. The confectionery department has a wonderful machine turning out a wide range of cake mixtures. 30 11 22a-c

1930 12 27

The booking hall at Cambridge railway station was the scene on Christmas Eve of one of the most extraordinary happenings ever witnessed. As a taxicab was being driven back to the station rank its driver suffered a seizure; the vehicle careered through the booking hall entrance and crashed into the collapsible iron gates near the ticket collector's box. If the barrier had been wide open it would have gone right on to the track, and a train was just due. 30 12 27

1931 05 01

At Cambridge the railway companies have a financial interest and working agreement with the Ortona bus company. The time will come when co-ordination will be very close; already they have had two experiments when railway return tickets could be used on the buses and vice versa, the Ortona chairman told an inquiry. In both borough and county they worked routes which were good and bad and excursions and long-distance tours helped to pay for unremunerative town services. 31 05 01c

1931 08 28

Great changes are planned at Cambridge station. The locomotive shed and yard is to be increased from 111 to 150 locomotives and an automatic coaling plant with a bunker capacity of 200 tons will be provided, equipped with the latest measuring devices so that enginemen may take their own supplies. There will be a 70 feet turntable capable of taking the largest express locomotives in use together with three new water columns 31 08 28b [2.3]

1931 10 02

New type of railcar being tried on branch lines – pic – 31 10 02q

1932 01 18

Cambridge suffered the loss of a centenarian with the death of Mrs Sarah Ann Howes of Glisson Road. She was a charming old lady with many interesting reminiscences. She attended the dinner on Parker's Piece to celebrate the coronation of Queen Victoria and remembered the opening of the Cambridge railway station and her first journey to Ely by train. Things are very different today, she would say: the poor people are much better off than they were and people have more sympathy with each other. 32 01 18b

1932 02 01

Cambridge stationmasters were told that protection from unfair and illegal road transport was essential. In the last year the number of passenger journeys have dropped by 16 million, goods trade decreased by 15 million tons and the livestock by a million head. Motor lorries were running away with the traffic they used to carry. A man can buy an old bus chassis, stick a lorry body on it and pick up traffic here and there, charging different prices as it suits him. 32 02 01

1932 03 16

Automatic coaling plant installed [1.4]

1932 12 23

Cambridge Railway Silver Prize Band opened their new hall at Fletcher's Terrace, Romsey Town. They started in 1919 and still had 10 foundation members of the band. They won the Grand Shield at the Crystal Palace in 1922 and in 1926 won the Junior Cup. It showed what an extremely progressive band they were. 32 12 23f

1933 01 30

railway v motor traffic – 33 01 30f & g

1933 04 01

Cambridge taxi drivers protested against the amount charged by the Railway Company for the use of the station ranks. Each owner is charged £6 a year, which they regard as excessive and want reduced to £2. But the LNER says it has already cut it from £9 and that drivers could pay eighteen pence weekly. Although taxi earnings had fallen off in recent years most paid the rent without difficulty. They also had the use of a shelter provided by the Company. 33 04 01a photo: 33 04 03c

1933 05 08

A motorist had a narrow escape at the Milton Road railway crossing subway. A medical student was driving towards Cambridge when two boys ran out into the road. One was knocked down. The car continued on a short distance before crashing into the fence and being left with one wheel suspended over the ten-feet drop. 33 05 08b

1933 10 04

Railways are a never-failing source of interest to young and old. Cambridge Rotarians were told that trains between Cambridge and London occasionally attain 72 mph and tunnels on the Newmarket line were constructed so that trains should not frighten racehorses in training. In the fens one could stand 100 feet away from the railway track and be shaken like a jelly when a train passed. The outer rail settled half-an-inch owing to the 'draw' when the dykes dried and telegraph poles and even buildings leaned outwards. But the permanent way was practically immune from flooding. 33 10 04

1934 04 14

The LNER will shortly be releasing a new crop of posters calling attention to holiday resorts and other places of interest on their lines. Cambridge is to be represented by a picture of St John's college gate which shows the artist, Fred Taylor, at his best. The poster advertising York shows Dick Turpin on his famous 'Black Bess' with the Minster in the distance. 34 04 14

1934 07 28

The 'His Master's Voice' show train arrived at Cambridge station as part of a national tour. It is one of the greatest collections of radio and gramophone instruments ever assembled. Visitors can see everything from a Columbia self-contained battery receiver to a luxurious ten-valve automatic record-changing radiogram. Other exhibits include a radio receive with no visible loud-speaker, the music being heard from behind the dial of an electric clock. The train carries its own power station, café and sleeping accommodation. 34 07 28

1934 11 27

Two local railwaymen died when the Cambridge to Liverpool Street passenger train struck a lorry on a level crossing near Broxbourne. The train consisted of a locomotive, tender and six coaches, two of which completely overturned. The engine fell upside down but its fire was still burning three hours later. Other coaches came to rest lying at all angles and passengers had remarkable escapes. 34 11 27 & a

1935 01 26

Sir – The Mill Road footbridge over the railway line was opened to the public on Monday August 3rd 1889. I was the last one to take the keys of the gates to the station – William Nelson. Sir - The iron footbridge over the railway on Mill Road had wooden steps and gave access to the open fields beyond it. In fact, so countrified was the area that when the Royal Standard was built it was known as

‘Apthorpe’s Folly’ from William Apthorpe the brewer who built it. The bridge now stands on Coldham Common where it spans the Newmarket Line – H.D.C. 35 01 26

1935 02 20

The first passenger service to be run by a petrol rail motor will be operated as an experiment between Cambridge and Oxford. The vehicle is a 56-seater, painted red and silver with a glass-covered conning tower from which the driver obtains a clear view of the line. There are two sets of eight pneumatic-tyred wheels, the car being kept on the rails by the usual metal flange. It runs equally well backwards or forwards, cruising about 55 mph with none of the roar of an ordinary train. Inside it is a cross between an underground carriage and a single-decker motor bus. On a test run the rail motor was the object of great interest. Similar vehicles have been popular in France for some time. 35 02 20 & a

1935 08 27

Widening Long Road railway bridge – photo – 35 08 27a

1935 12 11

Long Road railway bridge photo – 35 12 11d

1936 03 03

Long Road new railway bridge – photo – 36 03 03

1936 07 02

Improvements have been made at Cambridge station yard to provide better parking accommodation and cope with the heavy vehicular traffic. Three car parks have been allotted with an in-way and out-way for ‘through’ traffic. The Eastern Counties Omnibus Company’s services are located at the south side of the passenger station and will ‘set down’ and ‘pick up’ at the same place. The taxi-cab accommodation has also been divided into three parks with an in-way and out-way between them. It is hoped that with the co-operation of the owners of road motor-vehicles this will facilitate safe movement into and out of the station premises 36 07 02 (photo)

1936 08 01

The L.N.E.R. has made provision for a heat wave by giving orders that new trolleys which serve light refreshments to the passing travellers from station platforms should be equipped with refrigerating apparatus to ensure minerals and other soft drinks are kept cool. They also serve tea, coffee, cakes, cigarettes and the dainty modern successor to the railway sandwich of grandfather’s day. Two of the new barrows will be placed at Cambridge and Ely stations 36 08 01a

1936 08 29

Rail times for the journey from Cambridge to Oxford have increased since 1886 when the quickest journey took three hours. But although a noisy minority quick through journeys there were insufficient of them to make such a service pay. The railway company had experimented by running an express petrol rail car but it was a complete failure from a commercial point of view: the patronage was so small they had to give up within a few weeks. Additional stations had been opened on the line since the war, necessitating more stops. 36 08 29

1936 10 05

Six people were injured following a collision near Milton Road level crossing. A passenger train struck a light engine which was stationary on the reception goods line and its driver and fireman had a fortunate escape from being buried under tons of coal from the tender. The crossing-keeper said the passenger train was on the wrong line. Its front was badly smashed and a coupling broke but it did not leave the track. The passengers received a severe jolting. 36 10 05

1936 12 24

Chesterton Gravel Pits have been transformed into a flourishing business working from dawn to dusk. A Priestman dragline gets the gravel out of the ground, grabbing a third of a ton in its great steel jaws and depositing it in a truck which a patient horse drags to a narrow-gauge railway. It needs no driver but stands still while the load is emptied, then lumbers slowly back to fetch more. An ever-moving belt feeds a constant stream of raw gavel into the washing and grading machine from which it pours into appropriate heaps where a fleet of lorries cart it to its destination. 36 12 24a

1937 03 06

Motor vehicles are to be substituted for the horses engaged in railway cartage traffic in Cambridge. They will displace 18 horses after which the railway would have no horses in use 37 03 06a

1937 07 27

Milton Road railway crossing bridge proposed – 37 07 27

1937 08 05

A.M. Morley member of Cambridge Railway Ambulance team – 37 08 05a

1937 08 14

Travellers between London and Cambridge will soon have three additional fast trains performing the journey non-stop in 65 minutes. All will have buffet cars, bringing the total to 10 each way daily, in addition to the restaurant trains already running to Liverpool Street. The first service of five buffet cars was inaugurated between Cambridge and Kings Cross in 1932 when the trains each consisted of three coaches. So popular has the service become that at least double this accommodation has to be provided regularly 37 08 14b

1937 11 04

Milton Road railway bridge over level crossing proposed – 37 11 04

1938 01 01

The L.N.E.R. have just issued a new lantern lecture on Cambridge that may be borrowed free of charge by societies through the country. The 70 slides, which depict the colleges and other places of interest, should be of real value, because they will awaken interest in our town and University and may be the means of bringing us many visitors in days to come. Suitable reading matter has been prepared by Mr P.C. Fitzgerald beginning at the Round Church and describing a walk around the centre. This is one of 276 sets of lantern slides available from the Railway Company at King's Cross Station. 38 01 01

1938 01 15

The LNER is going to make a big effort to ensure that the interior of their trains is kept up to drawing room standard. A staff of travelling train attendants and cleaners is to be appointed who will accompany the train throughout the whole journey. They will ensure an adequate supply of clean towels and soap in the lavatories, remove litter from corridors, dust window ledges and empty ashtrays in compartments not occupied by passengers. When trains stop at stations they will polish up the outside door handles. Where conditions are suitable women will be appointed for this work as it is felt that the feminine touch will yield the most satisfactory results. 38 01 15a

1938 05 06

New diesel train tried on Cambridge-Oxford service – 38 05 06

1938 05 07

Railway exhibition with rolling stock opens – 38 05 07c

1938 08 24

One of original 'Flying Scotsmen' locomotives runs through Cambridge – 38 08 24a

1938 09 13

An experimental stream-lined Deisel-driven light passenger unit, something new in rail transport, made its first trip on the Oxford and Cambridge route. The unit consists of three cars permanently coupled together with a driver's cab at each end of the train. Acceleration was much more rapid than a steam train and instead of the familiar 'chugging' there was a pleasant whirr. Soon it was travelling at 75 mph with unusual smoothness. It has loud-speaking communication between driver and guard and the seats are reversible, so passengers can face whichever way they please. 38 09 13a & b

1938 10 08

At long last a start is to be made on the construction of a railway bridge on Milton Road in place of the present level crossing. Ministry of Transport approve has finally come through and work is expected to take 18 months. The crossing is frequently closed to road traffic and the adjacent subway, which has not sufficient head-room for larger vehicles, is narrow with steep gradients. Now there will be a bridge 44ft wide with a 30 ft carriageway and two footpaths. In 1935 2,000 motor vehicles and 1,000 pedal cycles used the road each day 38 10 08 [2.4]

1939 06 02

Three women were killed & other passengers injured when an express train from Hunstanton to London, via Cambridge collided with a lorry on an occupational crossing near Hilgay. The dead were all in the second carriage of the train, which toppled over on to a stationary goods train. The driver was D. Barber, of Hills Avenue and the fireman R. Miller, of Brookfields, Mill Road, Cambridge. 39 06 02 CIPof

1939 07 15

Although a considerable number of Militiamen from Cambridge travelled to their depots the scene at Cambridge railway station was little different from a normal Saturday. I expected to see goodbye and good luck messages being given to the first of the young men who are to give the next six months to the service of their country. But there were no martial strains to cheer them on their way. The explanation is that the men were free to travel as they wished and by travelling in small parties they avoided any publicity – and any reporters 39 07 15a

1939 09 01

The first children who have been separated from their London families by the dark threat of war arrived at Cambridge station. The train contained 800 boys and girls, all had a label bearing their name and address, a few carried a football, several had oranges. They were handed bags containing their rations and helped on to the waiting buses 39 09 01a

## **1940**

1940 05 17

Driver Saves Train. The driver of a passenger averted a serious accident near the Long Road Bridge when some goods wagons became derailed across the passenger train's path. Rapidly applying his brakes, he brought the train to a standstill just as it touched one of the wagons. Its four leading wheels were derailed, but neither passengers nor train crew were hurt. The goods train, which was on a loop line adjacent to the main line was derailed by safety points designed to prevent any train from the loop line entering the main line when the line has been signalled as clear and some dozen trucks came off the rails. The front of the passenger train ploughed ten or 12ft. into one of the wagons before coming to rest. The goods engine fell on its side, and the driver and fireman scrambled clear 40 05 17 CIPof

1940 09 13

Killed by Drifting Balloon.—A man was killed and considerable damage done when a barrage balloon drifted over Cambridge yesterday afternoon. The dead man was Daniel Dunston, a platelayer, of 146 Mill Road, Cambridge. Aged over 60, he was near the railway between Mill Road and Coldham's Lane Bridge when he was caught by a steel cable trailing from the balloon. He was



carried for a distance of over 30 yards and then dropped, sustaining fatal injuries. Before the accident the balloon had passed over the town at a considerable height. In the Mill Road area it came lower, and the cable threw a wireless pole through the roof of a house in Mill Road. The interior of the house was not damaged and no-body was injured in this incident. The balloon then gained height and drifted in the direction of Teversham. At Teversham Hall an old chimney stack on a scullery was struck by the cable. A piece of the cable was snapped off and the balloon at once shot up into the air and continued in an easterly direction. Telephone wires were damaged and the electricity supply for a village was affected for a time

1940 09 21

Firemen deal with truck load of ammunition which caught fire at the Coldham's North yard and spread to three other trucks – 40 09 21b

1941 01 09

Cambridge railway control centre in bomb-proof shelter – feature – 41 01 09a

1942 10 10

Shunter dies after falling from railway engine in shunting yard – 42 10 10a

1944 11 24

To police office in rail truck. — A goods wagon was used by a railwayman late one night to convey a suspected thief to the L.N.E.R. police, office at Cambridge, it was stated at Cambridge Borough Quarter Sessions, when a man was sent to prison for 21 months with hard labour. He was charged with stealing two cartons, containing cigarettes and shoes, together valued at £51 5s. the property of the L.N.E.R. The prosecution described how a railway policeman, on special duty at Coldham's Lane siding heard a noise coming from one of the wagons. He then saw the accused jump out of the wagon, and then stand on a carton, reach into the wagon, take another and put it on the ground beside the first one. As he was fastening the doors, the policeman arrested him.

1945 04 13

G.P.O. Van Burnt —The N.F.S. were called out at, about tea time on Tuesday to deal with a G.P.O. engineer's van which caught fire, whilst standing in the Cambridge railway station yard. The man in charge of the van was Robert William Benton of 49 Great Eastern Street. Cambridge, and also with him was Ernest Napier, another employee of the G.P.O., who lives at 106, Thoday Street. The men were engaged on work connected with the railway, and it is thought that a blow lamp which was standing near blew up, and ignited the contents of the van. The N.F.S. quickly dealt with the fire, although the body of the van was burnt out. Both men attempted to put the fire out with extinguishers. Mr. Benton received burns to his right hand, and Mr. Napier singed eye brows and hair. Both men were given first aid by the Ambulance Division of the L.N.E.R.

1945 06 20

Evacuees go back – cheery picture at Cambridge railway station – 45 06 20

1945 09 10

'Behind the scenes with the railway, problems of the Blitz, Cambridge's special efforts at train control room – details – CDN 1945 09 10

1946 09 16

Fire near engine sheds, railway station – 46 09 16

1946 10 17

Cambridge station would be improved with spacious ticket halls and wide platforms, refreshment and buffet rooms under new plans – 46 10 17a

1946 12 06

Railway station £1.2M plan; double single line from Ely Dock to Soham, restore pre-war standards – 46 12 06

1947 06 13

The road was partially blocked and a single line of traffic caused at Milton road crossing, Cambridge, yesterday when an engine loaded with tanks at the army camp, G.23, ran into the buffers and was carried on to the road. It came to a standstill with the engine projecting across the grass verge. It is understood that the engine began to move whilst each of the 12 trucks was being loaded with a Sherman tank. We understand that the front wheels of the engine were buried in the ground and that the rails are being burnt up. It may be some time before the engine can be lifted off the road by crane

1947 07 24

Seven members of the Cambridge National Fire Service were at Addenbrooke's Hospital this morning suffering from slight burns from mustard gas sustained in dealing with a fire involving a truck-load of 60 112lb American gas bombs on the railway line between Six Mile Bottom and Fulbourn late last night. The main line between Cambridge and Ipswich was closed to traffic as a result of contamination over 100 yards. Later the damaged wagon was tipped off the rails to the side of the line. The truck was one of a train of 30 to 40 carrying mustard gas bombs from Warren Wood, near Thetford, to Barry in Wales, for dumping in the sea. As it passed through Six Mile Bottom the stationmaster saw that the truck was ablaze. The burning wagon, the third from the engine, was uncoupled, and the engine restarted to pull it away from these. An eye witness said to a "Cambridge Daily News" reporter: "It was a spectacular sight. About fifty per cent of the bombs exploded with a "whoosh" and a burst of flame which shot fifty feet into the air. Poisonous fumes spread over a range of fifty or sixty yards. The police afterwards sealed off an area around the blaze to await decontamination

1947 11 10

The question of providing access to Cambridge railway station from the east side of the town was mentioned at the Town Council. Coun Amey said that at one time the people of Romsey had a bus service to the station but that had been taken away. Many railway workers lived in the Romsey area and the lack of any access to the station from that side caused them unnecessary miles of cycling and walking. He considered the 25 per cent of the population of the town should have access to the station. He understood that in the plan for rebuilding the railway station such an access is provided for

1947 11 29

The Garner family's 271 years service on the railway [1,11]

1947 12 20

The mustard gas bomb train fire at Six Mile Bottom last July had a sequel on Thursday when two L.N.E.R. drivers, Frederick Smart and William Thorburn, and two firemen, Joseph Westland and Alfred Chandler, all of Cambridge, were presented with the L.N.E.R. Medal. A special goods train included 40 open wagons of mustard gas bombs. When passing Six-Mile-Bottom driver Smart observed a fire in the third wagon. Fireman Chandler jumped down immediately and uncoupled the burning wagon from the rear part of the train. The engine then proceeded forward for 50 yards. The engineers tried to subdue the fire with buckets of water, fully aware of the dangerous nature of the contents of the wagon. 47 12 20

1948 01 02

The question of providing week end leave transport for personnel at the RAF Station, Oakington, evoked a good deal of discussion at the sitting of the Eastern Area Traffic Commissioners. Mr Lainson (for Premier Travel) mentioned that his company sought to provide a new express service from Oakington RAF to King's Cross, London. The proposed fare was 12s.6d return. He also said they were willing to provide a "feeder" service between Oakington and Cambridge Railway Station as his company could not hope to carry 600 odd personnel direct to London. There were approximately 1,100 personnel on the camp and something like 600 were on weekends each week. In view of the

limited station transport it was impossible to cater for all the troops by running into Cambridge Railway Station

1948 06 25

Fifty years railway service has been brought to an end by the retirement of Mr S.N. Wright from his post as Station Master at Cambridge. In Sept 1930 he was appointed Yard Master at Whitemoor, the only mechanised marshalling yard in this country, as a replica of the famous Hamm Yard in Germany. He was the first Yard Master to see the new working layout. At the time he took over the up yard had just been completed and the down yard was started the following year. He became Station Master in Cambridge in 1934. Recalling the war years he spoke of the high level of troop trains and special oil trains for the supply of various depots and dromes in East Anglia. During the war he was also Air Raid Master for station, goods and shunting yards, and in addition in charge of the fire watching for the same area

1948 10 23

Everyone will agree that Cambridge is very "full". The railways have had a particularly busy time. "We always prepare for a heavy October", said one official, "but the amount of luggage this term has been abnormal, especially bicycles, which are not easy things to handle in bulk". There is now the record number of 7,500 undergraduates in residence, a thousand more than this time last year. This is accounted for to some extent by the admission of Newnham and Girton to the University, but there are something like 400 more men. "This is a peak year", according to Mr E. Welbourne of Emmanuel, who does not think that a major decrease can be expected until 1951-2

**1950**

1950 05 10

Two Cambridge railwaymen, driver John Collingwood and guard Alfred Palmer have been awarded the "Daily Herald" Order of Industrial Heroism. The rescue which won them the "Workers VC" was made just a year ago at the Air Ministry's private siding at Lord's Bridge. Coming round a blind corner a goods train collided with a RAF motor lorry loaded with bombs. The driver was knocked unconscious and trapped in his cab; the petrol tank was smashed and petrol splashed onto the bonnet which was smoking fiercely. Several bombs fell off the lorry and rolled towards a pool of petrol. Despite the danger the railwaymen ran to the lorry, released the driver, lifted him out of the cab and carried him to safety 50 05 10

1951 05 27

To most the mention of a railway waiting room conjures up a vision of a dismal, dingy place. But that at Cambridge station is a very different state of affairs – in fact such a bright and cheerful room that I felt it would be quite a pleasure to lose one's train and have to sit there and wait for another! The colour scheme is a bright green and cream and the old-fashioned leather bench type seats have been replaced by small brown leather armchairs. In the ladies' waiting-room one beholds the astonishing sight of fresh flowers c51 05 27

1951 06 29

Two railwaymen whose prompt action averted serious damage being caused to a goods train were commended for their action. Driver C.V. Bloy and Fireman L.R. Gardiner of Cambridge each received a cheque for two guineas. The incident took place at Elsenham when Driver Bloy noticed that one of the wagons of his train was on fire. He immediately stopped and isolated it from the rest of the train. They stopped another train and asked the driver to use his slacker pipe to damp the fire on the wagon. In view of their action more serious damage was averted, bearing in mind that a number of petrol wagons were included in the train 51 06 29

1951 12 20

Cambridge undergraduates are acting as porters at Cambridge railway station to help cope with the "very heavy" Christmas postal parcel traffic. Temporary porters are paid daily on the basis of £5

10s.6d for a 44-hour week. The Post Office staff handle all letter mails, but only deliver the parcel traffic to the station, where it is handled by rail personnel. On Sunday and Christmas day there will be certain local withdrawals and additions to passenger services and on Boxing Day there will be nine additional afternoon and evening passenger trains to London.

1952 01 11

Cambridge Council agreed to include a £75,000 scheme for a sub-way approach to the railway station; thousands of people would benefit from it and it could take the place of another item on the priority list - £150,000 for a multi-deck car park. Coun H.C. Ridgeon said it would mean a tremendous saving to traffic from Hills Road and Mill Road and prove a great advantage to the town as a whole. Ald Briggs vigorously supported the suggestion to make it a top priority and pointed to the present "nightmare congestion" to press the need.

1952 02 09

Long before the arrival of the ten-coach funeral train bearing the body of King George VI, large crowds had gathered at the main vantage points along the line at Ely to pay their homage. At the station crossing hundreds of people assembled on both sides, whilst lines of traffic extended for some distance. Heads were bared as the train rolled smoothly through the station. Workmen who had given up part of their dinner hour and American servicemen were amongst the crowds. At the little village station of Waterbeach about 100 housewives, farmworkers and children gathered. A crowd of more than 800 people lined the marshalling yards on either side of Mill Road Bridge, Cambridge. The long black funeral coach, with all its windows blacked out passed exactly on time. Queen Elizabeth II gazed pensively out of a carriage window as the train passed a group of railwaymen standing caps off near Hills Road Bridge. 52 02 09

1952 02 09

The Royal Train bearing the King's body from Wolferton to King's Cross had two local men as its crew. The driver was Mr S. Harding who first drove the Royal train when the King came down to Trinity, and the fireman Mr C. Pearman from Weston Colville. Also on the train, as fitter, was Mr W.H. Simmons of Kelvin Close, Cambridge. Another local link is that the stationmaster at Wolferton, Mr Bernard Hodge, was formerly in charge of Whittlesford Station. At Cambridge South signal box The Welbeck Abbey, a Sandringham class engine, spick and span in polished olive green, was one of three trains standing by on the route in case of breakdown on the journey 52 02 09, 52 02 13

1953 04 09

A goods engine crashed through the buffer stops at Coldham's Bridge, Cambridge. The buffer stops were completely demolished and the engine buried itself up to the footplate in soft earth. The driver and fireman were both admitted to Addenbrooke's Hospital with slight injuries. Before the engine could be moved the boiler had to be emptied to lessen the weight. A 45-ton crane was needed to drag it backwards across a platform of sleepers until it was replaced on the rails. Work was hampered by the soggy ground and the presence of overhead telegraph wires. 53 04 09

1953 04 20

The circus has come to town – and it was greeted by thousands of smiling Cambridge faces. Six of Bertram Mills' Burmese elephants marched from the railway station, trunk to tail as the midget clown, Nikki, distributed leaflets about the circus from the basket of his fairy cycle. Elephants Lechney and Company did not lose their way – they've taken the same stroll for the last 18 years. Crowds covered the roundabout at Hills Road. The one at the Four Lamps was unrecognisable, the circus-gazers had swept half-way across the road. Soon afterwards the 'two-ton-tessies' were under canvas, chained to a platform.

1953 11 16

Premier Travel and Percival Motors have applied to combine their express carriage services from Cambridge to Oxford. They have been competing on the route since 1951. During term time there was mostly University traffic and in summer a great deal of tourists. The University World Service, said

the new service would be of great convenience to students from abroad, many of whom toured England after coming to Cambridge to study. The Eastern Counties, Associated Motorways and United Counties bus companies and the City of Oxford Motor Services opposed the application as did the Railway Executive who said the bulk of the Cambridge-Oxford traffic was moving by rail via Bletchley.

1954 02 08

A large new railway depot is to be established at Chesterton sidings. One area equipped with two Goliath cranes will store new and second-hand rails and emergency stock; another will refettle serviceable switches and crossing units while a third will be equipped for the mechanised pre-assembly, loading and despatch of complete lengths of plain line for permanent way renewals. There will also be dismantling and sleeper areas together with a chair and smalls area and a flash butt welding plant. New access roads will be built together with a canteen.

1954 07 19

The Minister's decision on the County Development Plan has been announced. The only major Cambridge items not approved are the site of the bus station between Christ's college & Emmanuel and the proposed development for residential purposes of the smallholding land north of Arbury Road. All the central area road proposals including the 'spine relief road', the new Guildhall Street and a cross-town route joining Emmanuel Street with Downing Street have been approved together with the new Chesterton Bridge over the Cam near Walnut Tree Avenue, a multi-storey car park in Corn Exchange Street and a subway at the railway station.

1954 07 21

The attention of county planners has been drawn to a press report setting out proposals by the British Transport Commission to establish a new railway depot at Chesterton. At no time have they given any indication of these intentions; indeed the council has pressed for the reduction of railway activities on this site. It is clear that the arrangements are so far advanced that there is no likelihood of them being held up or abandoned at this late stage. When completed the depot will require a large additional labour force, which is clearly in contradiction to the agreed industrial policy for Cambridge. Future schemes should be discussed well in advance with the planners and the matter will be placed in the hands of local Members of Parliament. 54 07 21

1954 10 27

Railway engines seem to be making a habit of running off the lines into the cottage garden of the crossing keeper at Coldham's Lane, Cambridge. For the second time in recent months a goods locomotive has gone astray there when the engine travelling light (without wagons) made a mess of his well-kept plot. The large crane used in lifting the heavy vehicle was brought to the scene and the engine was lifted back on to the line. Dislocation to other traffic was very light. 54 10 27

1954 12 06

The Government has partially allowed an appeal by Moss (Cambridge) Ltd over two advertising boards displayed at first floor level on a shop in Hills Road. It says that one of them seriously detracts from the appearance of the building. The premises are at a busy junction in a mixed locality. On the opposite side are two large garages and a parade of shops. To the north the road crosses over the railway and adjoining the bridge are the rail goods yards and the market. There are large advertising hoardings on each side of the bridge and numerous other advertisements on buildings in the vicinity

1955 02 11

Diesel train on test [1.22]

1955 03 04

British Railways had considered closing the Cambridge-Mildenhall line because of its steady loss in revenue and uneconomic running costs. But now they hope that by the introduction of two-car diesel units and cheaper fares they can make the line a paying proposition. But people in Isleham had to

walk to the station and in some instances this was three miles away; others had to go to Kennett station. They wanted convenience and had petitioned for a bus service. Messrs Murfet's would provide a bus into Cambridge for those who wished to shop or visit the cattle market; it would also serve Chippenham and Snailwell. 55 03 04

1955 03 28

Stationmasters were told that they have been Cinderellas for long enough and should take everything that is coming. It would take some time before modernisation could fully come into being but next year a scheme will start in Cambridge for a diesel yard. Electrification will take place in due course, but must take its place with other urgent schemes. People were always complaining about the lack of courtesy on the railways and very few letters of appreciation were received. 55 03 28

1955 05 13

British Railway's new weedkiller train can cover up to 100 miles of track a day and recently made the Ely-March run handing out lethal doses of weed-killing concentrate at up to 20 mph. It is operated by two Cambridge men, Bob Lee and Jack Aldhouse. Working away from home has its disadvantages but their living accommodation is as luxurious as any caravan with interior-sprung mattresses, dining room, galley and chemical lavatory. Jack attends to the living accommodation and Arthur keeps an eye on the machinery. 55 05 13 b & c

1955 09 10

Cambridge station improvements - cartoon – 55 09 10aa

1955 10 13

For the passengers on the Cambridge to Kettering train it was a normal journey; but for the guard, Archie Sear of Cambridge it brought an end to a career lasting 50 years on the railway, 23 of them on the Kettering line. He became a familiar figure to regular travellers and gained the title of 'The Varsity Guard'. He has had a remarkably smooth career and has never been asked to look after anything more unusual than dogs, kittens and schoolchildren. The train has remained accident-free and he has never had anything unusual to report – which in itself is extraordinary. 55 10 13

1956 02 07

A revolutionary new kind of rail transport has been the centre of attraction at Cambridge Railway Station. The huge shining dark green diesel-engined unit is unlike the traditional train. It has higher speed, greater comfort and a complete absence of smoke. The drivers cab looks more like a scientist's workshop than the dirty, greasy footplate and the carriages resemble long-distance buses with electric devices which circulate hot air during cold weather and cooling breezes in the summer. 56 02 07a & b & c

1956 09 01

Last year Cambridge station sent over 900,000 people safely on their way, another 1,000 a day were transferred from one train to another without passing through the ticket barriers. During rush periods they can send 'The Fenman' on its way only two minutes after arriving although hundreds of passengers get on and off and scores of parcels taken from brake vans. In the telegraph office where the most up-to-date teleprinters and signalling equipment are installed, 1,300 telegrams and 1,200 phone messages a day are dealt with. 56 09 01-a-b

1957 11 01

British Railways modernisation plans involve conversion from steam to diesel traction. A diesel instruction train has come to Cambridge where it will be open for inspection by drivers, firemen and fitters. It consists of two coaches including a complete set of driver's controls and a room with cinema projectors where lectures are given by the Resident Instructor. When it was at March 523 people visited with a record attendance at one of the lectures. 57 11 01

1956 12 08

Christmas tree in railway station entrance – 56 12 08a

1957 01 26

Cambridge Civil Defence ambulance section carried out a successful exercise in rendering first aid to the injured. It was assumed a serious railway accident had taken place near the Eastern Gas Board sidings in Coldham's Lane. Casualties were evacuated to Swann's Yard Civil Defence Rescue Site where the Hospital Nursing Mobile First Aid Unit, under Dr C. Attwood, set up a Receiving Centre. 57 01 26

1957 06 07

A Cambridge biologist found radio-active particles in samples of air he took near his house in St Barnabas Road. He claimed it was contaminated by smoke from the railway and contained minute particles of dirt which harboured germs. He sought a reduction on his rating assessment from £46 to £35. 57 06 07c

1957 11 01

British Railways modernisation plans involve conversion from steam to diesel traction. A diesel instruction train has come to Cambridge where it will be open for inspection by drivers, firemen and fitters. It consists of two coaches including a complete set of driver's controls and a room with cinema projectors where lectures are given by the Resident Instructor. When it was at March 523 people visited with a record attendance at one of the lectures. 57 11 01

1957 12 06

A Greville Road resident gained a rate reduction because of the railway. He complained of "great clouds of belching smoke, very unpleasant to breathe, at all hours of day and night". Shunting noises during the night woke residents and the obnoxious smells coming from trucks left standing in the sidings were especially objectionable at mealtimes. The "sooty and sulphurous atmosphere" made the properties deteriorate before their time and layers of soot in the gardens choked plants. 57 12 06a

1957 12 19

Great Eastern House, the new British Railways office in Tenison Road, is a functional modern building with the high standard of architectural design necessitated in a University city. Shaped like a vast cube, its tiers of windows catch the light row upon row. Inside is the railwayman's dream. Gone are the rickety stairs, the walls in green or chocolate and cramped offices with old-fashioned coal fires. Instead there is light, ivory-coloured walls and glass partitions, a lecture room, bar and two billiard tables 57 12 19a, b, c [2.9]

1957 12 19

Railway modernisation means that steam-hauled passenger services will soon be replaced with modern two-car diesel trains. They will be maintained at a new up-to-date diesel depot being erected in Coldham's Lane. In addition to great efficiency this will eliminate the smoke nuisance in built-up areas. 57 12 19e & f & g

1958 01 24

A derailment in the Coldham's Lane arrival sidings, visible from Mill Road Bridge, attracted a good deal of public attention yesterday. Engine, tender and three wagons of a goods train came off the rails while the train was moving at reduced speed into the sidings. The driver and firemen got clear but the guard suffered some facial bruises. 58 01 24a

1958 07 03

German-build lightweight diesel engines will shortly go into service on Eastern Region branch lines. Based at Cambridge they will be used initially on the Witham-Maldon, Witham-Braintree and Audley-End- Bartlow services. Each rail-bus provides seating for 56 passengers and standing room for a further 40. Powered by a 150 h.p. engine, it has a six-speed gearbox and can attain a speed of 55 mph. 58 07 03

1958 10 25

The era of smoky trains has gone and the “dieselisation” of Cambridge railway services comes into operation today. Passengers will travel in fast, clean and comfortable two-car light-weight diesel trains with accommodation for 103 second-class and 12 first-class passengers. The return fair to Peterborough has been halved and journey time reduced. For too long railways have suffered from old equipment and services planned for the steam age; it is not ‘jam tomorrow’, it is jam today, a rail official promised. 58 10 25 & a

1958 11 04

Diesel trains inaugural run Cambridge to Peterborough – 58 11 04 & a [1]

1958 12 19

Traffic over Hills Road railway bridge, a bottleneck on the principal road into Cambridge, is extremely heavy. Visibility over the summit is severely restricted and many accidents have occurred there. The existing steel plate girder bridge has deteriorated with age and now work will start to provide a new twin two-lane carriageways and footpaths. The new bridge will be designed to allow for widening should additional railway tracks be needed in the future 58 12 19b

1959 01 06

Great Eastern Railway now offers a service which is second to none. Speedy and comfortable trains leave at regular minutes past the hour and take the same time to reach their destination. Fast services have open up East Anglia to the man who was forced to journey by road – and it is no better than the rest of the country in its trunk road network. Now those who previously used cars must now ask themselves whether it is really worthwhile driving 59 01 06

1959 01 13

The widening of Hills Road Railway Bridge may be delayed as negotiations have still to be completed on what proportion of the cost will be borne by the County Council. The East side of the new bridge should run straight from the frontage line of no.129 Hills Road to the entrance of the coal-yard opposite the junction with Brooklands Avenue. There could be a new access from Cherry Hinton Road to the Cattle Market and railway sidings. 59 01 13d

1959 03 31

The progressive dieselisation of the branch line services has seen the construction of a maintenance depot near Coldham’s Lane bridge. It affords facilities for carrying out examinations for multiple unit trains, rail-buses and diesel-mechanical and diesel-electric shunters. It is open 24 hours a day, seven days a week and has a staff of 100 men. 59 03 31d & e

1959 05 27

British Railways announce that passenger train services between St Ives and Kettering and the freight train services from Buckden and Grafham stations will be withdrawn on June 15<sup>th</sup>. In addition trains running between Cambridge and St Ives on weekdays which at present serve Kettering will also be withdrawn. Arrangements will be made to augment the service to St Ives by the 10.17 am Cambridge to Peterborough train calling at Histon, Oakington, Longstanton and Swavesey stations and an additional train leaving for St Ives at 5.15pm calling at all stations 59 05 27a

1959 11 04

Reuben Taylor, who has been Cambridge Station Master since 1948, has hung up his top hat and frock coat for the last time. He started as a junior clerk at Haverhill station in 1910 and has seen immense changes. When he first took over at Cambridge some 700,000 passengers a year went through his hands. Last year it was double, to say nothing of the tremendous increase in parcel and freight traffic. “Road transport will never take the place of railways: we get no end of people coming into Cambridge from the country and leaving their cars at the station park before catching trains to London”, he said. 59 11 04c



**1960s    *The Cambridgeshire Collection has detailed newspaper cuttings files from this date***

**1960**

1960 04 28

Costs of building the new Hills Road railway bridge have increased by £20,000 because unusually difficult ground conditions mean it needs deeper and more substantial foundations. But the County Council hopes to construct a bridge over the level crossing on the Cambridge Road at Histon. It will mean the demolition of five houses and affect the gardens of 17 other properties as well as the complete rebuilding of the Histon nursery school. 60 04 28

1960 05 13

The change from steam to diesel at the Cambridge railway depot has transformed train drivers' lives. The rattling, hissing, gritty foot-plate - where in cold weather they were frozen on one side and baked on the other - has been exchanged for the enclosed windowed cabin of the new engines with its upholstered driver's seat and armrests, its foot warmers, compact controls and ashtray. Driver William Creek who worked with steam for 40 years says it used to be rough – his insides were shaken up by the rattling. There was a wooden seat but it was more comfortable standing up. Fellow drivers William Thulborn and Sidney Hutton agree. – 60 05 13b

1960 06 21

It took twenty men twenty hours at the week-end to demolish Cambridge's old Hills Road Bridge – twice as long as the contractors had anticipated. Originally it was thought that the removal of 140 tons of steel girders would take a little over eight hours, but the trains passing underneath proved a little more troublesome than expected. The men took advantage of the frequent breaks to wipe the sweat from their brows and light a cigarette. The scene resembled firework night for, as the oxyacetylene guns cut through the girders, a spray of red hot sparks would fall on the ground giving an impression of a 'golden rain' 60 06 21

1960 08 06

Mill Road Railway Bridge was built in 1889 and Percy North, the well-known chiropodist, remembers playing under the bridge arches when they were being constructed. There was a level crossing over the railway then but it was not much used because there was hardly any traffic. There was nothing beyond, Great Eastern Street and Argyle Street were just ballast pits for the railway and the only house was a large one where the Broadway stands today, he recalls. 60 08 06 & a

1960 09 03

Barnwell Junction seems the perfect model of a small Victorian railway station with its lacy wooden canopy and the initials of the Great Eastern Railway intertwined among the cast iron legs of its platform seats. It has two passenger trains a day but handles 30,000 tons of merchandise and minerals a year including sugar beet, grain and potatoes, malt from Barnwell Maltings and scrap iron from the railway's own engineering depot. It's one porter, Mr Bidwell keeps the platform swept and is also gardener, handyman and weekly replenisher of the oil lamps in the semaphore signals. 60 09 03b

1960 12 09

'The Cambridge Late Arrivals' group was set up to co-ordinate the indignation rail travellers felt during the upheaval of electrification. Now the trains are much more comfortable and carriages have the air of a club-room. Men – some 200 of them – willingly pay £9 15s (£9.75) for a monthly season ticket and the privileged of leading a quieter family life in the province. It is still cheaper to make the daily journey and avoid the great expense of finding a house or flat in London. 60 12 09a

1960 12 17

Hills Road Railway Bridge is functioning almost as normal again. After a year's work during which the traffic has had to contend with considerable difficulties, the road is now suitable for two-lane traffic. Resurfacing will not be carried on for another 12 months in order to allow for subsidence and for several more weeks workmen will be patching up. Work on Churchill College continues as does work on 13 three-storey terrace houses and 60 maisonettes at East Road. Most have their roofs on and one block of houses has its windows in. 60 12 17b

1961 02 04

Rail passengers had a narrow escape when a car was driven straight through Cambridge station booking hall and came to rest with its front wheels on the platform. Ticket collector Mr W. Franklin was standing in his booth by the barrier at the time and was taken to hospital suffering from shock. An undergraduate who had driven to meet a friend from the train failed to swing round in front of the booking hall and burst through the right-hand door smashing the indicator board and barrier gate before coming to a standstill. It is 12 years since a similar accident involving a taxi driver occurred at the station. 61 02 04 photo 61 02 06a

1961 03 14

Gerald Tweedie of Cherry Hinton Road has assured himself a place in the railway history of this country. He can now call himself Britain's Number One Train Spotter as he has seen, listed and made notes on every one of the 60,000 or so steam railway engines operated during the last 30 years – the first man ever to have completed such a mammoth task. Now the CDN has arranged for him to have a ride on the footplate of an A4 streamlined Pacific engine 61 03 14. Gerald Tweedie, trainspotter has ride on footplate – 61 04 10

1961 04 21

A motorist who drove his car through the booking hall of Cambridge Railway Station and crashed into its exit gateway pleaded not guilty to careless driving and driving a vehicle with inefficient brakes. William Franklin said he was collecting tickets at the station barrier when he turned round and saw the car in the hall, one man buying a ticket was knocked down. The driver said he was going to meet a train but his brakes failed as he approached the station and he was placed in a terrible dilemma. He changed down to second gear but as there were people by the side of the entrance hall he decided to drive straight through. As it was a mechanical failure he was given an absolute discharge. 61 04 21b

1961 09 08

Joseph Farrington has worked for the Gas Board since 1917. He operates a Super Sentinel Loco, called 'Lucy', at the Coldham's Lane depot. Every morning he gets it going on a diet of wood and coke, eases her out of her shed and down to the six trucks with which they move supplies of coal from the main railway line, depositing it in a tipper. The operation is repeated until 400 tons have been shifted. The coal is then taken up into a hopper and unloaded into a lorry which transports it to the gasworks on Newmarket Road. 61 09 08c

1961 10 04

Austin Beales and Coote and Warren opened their new fuel oil terminal and solid fuel depot in Clarendon Road, the most modern in Europe. Oil arrives from Mobil's refinery chiefly by rail and is discharged into three main storage tanks before being sent by road tanker over a wide area. Solid fuel deliveries are concentrated in Cambridge itself. Each year 45,000 tons is unloaded from rail wagons by two cranes with 65 wagons of solid fuel arriving each week. 61 10 04b & c

1961 11 02

Chesterton Railway Bridge with approaching train – photo 61 11 02

1961 12 20

The railway line between Cambridge and Mildenhall opened on Whit Monday 1884 with the Fordham to Mildenhall extension nine months later. The branch line was probably never self-supporting and

today there are two trains daily. All the villages between Barnwell and Fordham are well served by buses and it is only Mildenhall and Isleham that do not have a satisfactory alternative service. All existing parcel facilities would remain except at Isleham and Quy stations which would be reduced to unstaffed sidings. Even at Quy staff would be provided during the heavy sugar beet season to assist farmers loading traffic, an Inquiry heard. 61 12 20a & b

1962 04 01

Police are searching for a silver-grey American car which smashed down level crossing gates in Milton Road. Crossing keeper, Edward Dyson, had just closed the gates ready for the train when a large American car coming from the Milton direction rammed them. It reversed and headed back the way it had come. Members of the Cambridge City Reserves football team returning from their evening match at King's Lynn left their coach and helped drag parts of the broken gates from the rails. Mr Dyson telephoned Chesterton Junction and had a goods train diverted through Ely. 62 04 01a

1962 06 08

Cambridge railway station will become the "Gateway to East Anglia" when a new high speed passenger service to Oxford is introduced. At present there is only one through train a day between the two University cities but now a further seven will speed the service, some taking only two hours for the journey. From Cambridge there is easy access to Norwich and resorts such as Hunstanton, Lowestoft and Yarmouth. 62 06 08b

1962 06 18

Two local men were on the footplate of a B.1 class locomotive when it steamed out of Cambridge Railway Station to close an 80 years' period of railway history. Driver Bertram George and fireman Ivor Wilson were in charge of the 100-ton engine as it left the goods sidings with one carriage and a truck. It was the last train to leave Cambridge hauled by a steam engine. During the weekend a dozen other steam locomotives were driven or pulled to engine sheds in London as railwaymen finally severed their connections with the 'steamers'. Now all trains are being hauled by the new high-speed diesel locomotives 62 06 18

1962 08 20

Railway station on listed buildings list – 62 08 20a

1962 12 07

Two railway lines in Cambridgeshire are under threat following Dr Beeching's proposals. All lines transporting less than 10,000 people and 10,000 tons of freight a week may close. This includes the line from Cambridge through Histon and Oakington and the one to Mildenhall through Burwell. Fruit growers would be seriously affected and have to switch to road transport, putting up prices. Rural bus services are another failure of Government policy and had been cut because they were unprofitable, a Labour meeting was told 62 12 07c

1963 01 30

The delivery period for coal in Cambridge is still about a fortnight even though snow has released many frozen supplies. But reports of 'coal racketeering' are unfair, according to Austin Beales, one of the largest coal distributors. Certain small merchants have been in great difficulties during the past few weeks as the freeze-up of stocks at the pit-heads had brought immeasurable problems to the industry. People must wait until the National Coal Board in co-operation with the railways, regain their normal smooth functioning. 63 01 30

1963 03 27

The Beeching report on the future of British Railways suggests the closing down of 19 stations in the Cambridge area – including three serving the main towns of Haverhill, Saffron Walden and St Ives. There would be the complete withdrawal of passenger services from branch lines, Cambridge-March, Gt Shelford-Marks Tey, Audley End & Bartlow lines. Amongst the village stations closed to

passenger traffic would be Histon, Wimblington and Chatteris, Bartlow, Pampisford and Linton together with Soham and Fordham. Services from Black Bank would also cease 63 03 27 & a

1963 04 02

The withdrawal of passenger train services from St Ives would be a great blow to trade; people in villages would not use buses with that tedious journey, the town's Chamber of Commerce heard. The line from March to Cambridge would remain open for freight and a rail conductor service for passengers might be provided. But it would deter industrialists who were considering setting up business. More light industries should be encouraged; they would supply the population to fill houses and the factories would contribute towards the rates and help meet the high cost of the new sewerage system. 63 04 02a

1963 04 10

Flying Scotsman arrives at Cambridge station en route to London where it will pull an enthusiasts' train 63 04 10

1963 04 13

Parcels which arrived at Cambridge railway station in a tremendous rush just before Easter have caused a bigger backlog on deliveries than they did at Christmas. The parcels, mainly for local shops changing and increasing their stock for the beginning of the University term, are lining the platforms in barrow loads. "We just can't cope with them. We hope people expecting parcels will come to the station and collect them themselves if they're in a hurry. It will be the end of next week before we clear them", a railway spokesman said. 63 04 13

1963 04 25

The Beeching report says the Cambridge main line would be retained but the branch lines that feed it are going to be withdrawn, meaning the business will fall off and putting it in future jeopardy. Three miles away a bridge was being built over a railway line where passenger services may be withdrawn and nobody knows how long it was going to be used for freight. Yet at the same time funding for the road bridge over the Cam at Walnut Tree Avenue was deferred time after time, councillors complained. 63 04 25b

1963 07 05

The G.P.O.'s experiment to improve the parcel post service started with five new lorries operating from the parcels centre in Rosemary Lane. The present system is slow and costly. The new method will operate partly by rail and partly by road with parcels moved in bulk consignment. They hope it will reduce costs, speed the service and improve reliability. 63 07 05

1963 07 31

Railway workers ran along the main lines just outside Cambridge Railway Station to warn the driver of an oncoming passenger train when a 100-ton diesel locomotive was derailed and fell across the tracks near the end of the platforms. Two platforms were put out of action because of blocked lines and the points mechanism was damaged. Repair gangs using a heavy mobile steam crane worked through the night to get the engine back on the track but the incident caused heavy delays to passenger traffic. Two other derailments occurred within 48 hours 63 07 31b, 63 08 01

1963 08 09

Gerald Forbes Tweedie, the Cambridge travel enthusiast, became the first man to have 'spotted' every steam or electric engine on use on Britain's railways during the last 24 years. Now the 41-year-old printing machine minder hopes to record his 1,000th night spent in a Youth Hostels Association building. As he travels through the country lanes seeking fresh railway lines to explore and new YHA hostels in which to stay, he makes a note of every new inn and public house sign he sees. So far he has collected 3,000 names of pubs and breweries. 63 08 09

1963 12 06

British Railways announced plans to close the Oxford to Cambridge line through Bletchley and Bedford, despite proposals in the Beeching Report for modified passenger services. A financial appraisal shows the line is losing money. MP Francis Pym says he has been approached by constituents in Gamlingay and Longstowe and will take every step to make local views known to the Minister of Transport. There will be a detailed examination and consultations before closure takes effect. 63 12 06

1964 01 11

The Oxford to Cambridge railway line links the two important university cities and should remain open, a Reinvigoration Society says. It bisects the line from King's Cross to Peterborough at Sandy where the two sets of platforms are adjacent. But no attempt has been made to encourage interchange of passengers. Through trains could be run from Norwich to Bristol in five hours using inter-city diesel units with miniature buffet facilities. But the route is divided between three of British Railway's regions and an overlord – line manager should be appointed to co-ordinate services 64 01 11b

1964 02 17

Cambridge to Oxford railway line too important to be lost – feature – 64 02 17b

1964 07 11

With a shuddering roar, a diesel locomotive disturbed the sleepy silence of Mildenhall railway station and with four empty wagons trundled away on the last trip to Cambridge. The station's freight line, which opened in 1885, had fallen under the Beeching axe. The stationmaster, Mr N.S. Sykes, stood on the platform among weeds and wild flowers and waved as the train pulled out. Passenger services were withdrawn in 1961 and freight limited to coal, cattle seed and worn tyres which were sent to Harwich for export. 64 07 11

1964 07 16

If Oxford to Cambridge passenger rail services are withdrawn alternative road services will add congestion – 64 07 16

1964 09 05

Cambridge Railway station to build park for 200 cars, coal tower to be demolished; Histon station prepare for garden competition – 64 09 05

1965 04 15

Barnwell railway station children of children of D.B. Thornhill – photo – 65 04 15a

1965 09 10

Cambridge railway station– photo feature – 65 09 10b, 10c

1965 09 14

Railway signalman Cambridge South Box H. Andrews reflects on 45 years' service – 65 09 14a

1965 09 15

Minister rejects protest over closure Cambridge to Oxford railway line – 65 09 15a

1965 10 25

Railway not hopeful about bridge from Davy Road to link large housing estates at Cherry Hinton – 65 10 25a

1966 01 18

Upper freight yard depot of British Railways to close on January 31st and part of the land may be used in a new road scheme connecting Brooklands Avenue and Newmarket Road. The public depot on the other side of the main line to remain open 66 01 18c

1966 04 01

Rail services between Cambridge and Oxford to continue as no adequate alternative bus service – 66 04 01c

1969 01 24

Cambridge-St Ives railway line could be kept running – feature – 69 01 24 23

1969 03 20

Dunsmore Close, modern development astride old Cambridge- Mildenhall railway line – photo – 69 03 20

1969 06 19

Gelignite used to blast away one of four brick piers which carried the old Cambridge to Bedford railway line over the Cam at Trumpington – 69 06 19

## **1970**

1970 10 05

Cambridge to St Ives railway line final journey – 70 10 05

1971 02 16

Railway station façade facelift – 71 02 16

1971 08 05

Cambridge to Fen Ditton road closed for removal Railway Bridge on old Mildenhall line – 71 08 05

1971 08 05

Railway station new travel centre and entrance hall opened – 71 08 24

1972 08 05

The long-awaited Cambridge Transportation Study was finally published yesterday. It is two years overdue and has cost £113,000 - almost £1,000 a page. It was jointly commissioned in 1967 by the Cambridge city and County Councils and the University. It was to be carried out by R. Travers Morgan and Partners and was estimated at that time to cost £78,000. Its major proposals include a Railway Road leaving the A10 south of the Trumpington street traffic lights, hugging the northbound railway track all the way to Newmarket Road. After crossing the Cam the new road would veer sharply west to follow the St Ives railway line along to the A10 Milton Road before linking up with Arbury Road. The Railway Road should be largely dual two-lane carriageway. Full construction could take many years

1972 12 16

The last five plots of the old Cambridge to Bedford railway were sold yesterday for a total of £137,250. The line was once the link between Cambridge and Bedford but those days went when Beeching axed the route. Since then British Rail have taken up the rails, and sold the land on which they stood to neighbouring farmers. Yesterday four of the stations and their accompanying yards came under the auctioneers hammer. The last plot was the Old North Road station at Longstowe. The buyer who paid £23,000 for it said he had no idea what would be done with the 1.25 acres site and the station house, booking office, waiting rooms and goods shed

1973 02 14

The Government have abandoned the Hovertrain project. They decided two weeks ago not to plough more money into the project, but the decision was kept secret because the Aerospace Minister, Mr Michael Heseltine, hopes to sell off parts of the project to two contractors. Mr Heseltine said nearly all the 150 workers on the project would lose their jobs. An arrangement has been made with Hawker Siddeley to develop the linear motor. British Rail had agreed to continue development of the magnetic suspension system. The Tracked Hovercraft Company was set up in 1967 and £5,250,000 was originally earmarked for the project

1973 07 11

The possible reopening of the St Ives - Cambridge passenger rail service is a very real priority, said Mr Robert Gemell, the Chief Passenger Manager of British Rail. He gave an assurance that he was doing all he could to get the line reopened. But the future was really in the hands of local councils and the people living in the area to make their demands for this service heard in the right places, he said. The final decision was with the Government on the advice of British Rail. The recent estimated cost of re-opening the service was £100,000 but British Rail were trying to see if this could be reduced

1974 05 24

British rail passenger fares will go up by an average of 12% from June. Cambridge commuters to London will pay £1.79 instead of £1.60 for a second-class day return, while the ordinary return fare goes up from £2.55 to £2.87. Other increases affecting local travellers are: Huntingdon-London day return up to £1.79; Ely to London day return now £2.36 while a second-class single from Cambridge to Ipswich goes up 10p to 85p

1974 12 31

The Earith site of the Tracked Hovercraft trials is up for sale. The main "hangar" area of 6,300 square feet of industrial floor space is on offer. The prototype train ran at 107 mph before being scrapped in February last year because the Government would not put in the £4 million necessary to finance the second stage of the project which had, at that time, cost £5 m. The Government gave the go-ahead last August for the dismantling of the three-mile test track. The technology is now being pursued in Japan, Western Germany, France & Canada

1975 04 15

Eight old houses near the railway line, at Mill Road, Cambridge, are being offered by the city council, which owns them, to dossers and down-and-outs. The houses are scheduled for eventual demolition to allow British Rail to widen the bridge when it starts work on electrifying the main Cambridge-London line. But because no date has been set the council has offered them on an annual basis to Cambridge Night Shelter. The council considers the houses which stand on the Argyle Street corner to be suitable because there are no other occupied houses immediately adjacent.

1975 07 23

Cambridge city council has accepted an invitation from the County Council to build an £8,500 bus-rail interchange improvement outside Cambridge railway station. The scheme includes bus waiting bays and shelters.

1975 12 19

A plea was made for British Rail to open a station at Cherry Hinton. The existing traffic problems would get even worse when more than 4,000 extra people went to the village with the new council development. Passenger trains could easily stop there. The idea had already been suggested informally by British Rail and was under consideration. Coun Taylor said a mother with children could pay £1 just to get to Cambridge and back by bus. Coun Rowley thought this was evidence of how the bus service had failed

1976 04 02

A plan for building a £13,000 halt at Cherry Hinton on the main Cambridge-Ipswich railway line was rejected by the county highways committee. Cambridge city council had asked for the halt, saying it would be useful for commuters and people working in the expanding office development in Station Road. Councillor Charles Swift (Peterborough) who is a train driver said that halts usually consisted of just a few old railway sleepers by the side of the track and not the station and buildings proposed for Cherry Hinton.

1976 06 29

Railway workers spent almost seven hours repairing a section of the main King's Cross to Cambridge line at Shepreth which became distorted because of the heatwave. As temperatures hit 94 degrees in the centre of Cambridge one sour note came from King's College chapel where the organ was out of tune because of the weather.

1977 01 13

Heavy snow hit Cambridge as the worst weather for 14 years caused nationwide chaos and led to widescale disruption on the roads and railways. Weathermen say the snowfalls will be heavy and prolonged and warm winds could produce drifts. In many places there were snowfalls of more than one foot. Thousands of people were late for work as hard-packed snow, freezing fog and black ice made driving treacherous. And many trains were late or cancelled despite an all-night fight against the Arctic conditions by British Rail who called in their full cold weather emergency procedures.

1978 05 24

Barnwell station will not be reopened to deal with next season's influx of soccer fans ... because British Rail does not own it. There has been growing support for the idea since Cambridge United won promotion to the Second Division, as a way of stopping fans who come by rail from wandering through the city. But the station has ceased to exist and the land is part of a private dwelling. Any new halt would be an expensive and complicated business. The station house, platform and access were sold off in the 1960s and now form the flourishing Kindrum Kennels.

1978 12 15

The East Anglian Railway Development Society urges the restoration of passenger trains on the Cambridge to St Ives line. Large domestic and industrial developments have taken place along the route and the new housing on the Arbury Road Estate would make for increased usage at Histon and even warrant a new halt in the Kings Hedges area. A Parkway station should be built to serve the Sawston area and Meldreth become the boarding point for Kings Cross trains.

1979 01 23

The railway line between Swavesey and Cambridge will be used for a passenger service on March 31st for the first time since its closure in 1971. Trains will call at Longstanton, Oakington and Histon – at least for one day. A special train is being organised by the Railway Development Society in conjunction with British Rail. It will leave Swavesey at 1pm and arrive at Cambridge an hour later, returning at 5.30 pm. The fare for adults will be about £1, children 75p and cycles free.

1979 09 13

The Cambridge area may increasingly become a territory for commuters due to the combined effect of the M11 and railway electrification; estate agents say people should buy houses now, while they can afford them. Heydon is among the more sought-after villages but unfortunately opportunities to buy homes there are rare. One of the few is a four-bedroomed detached house situated in large grounds, including a shower room, carpets and kennels. It is priced at around £69,950

1979 09 17

There are three telephone operators on duty at Cambridge railway station; they can tell someone the train times between Madras and Bombay, but don't want to. Because Cambridge isn't on the main line most cross-country rail inquiries involve looking up train times and co-ordinating them on several different pages of the standard published timetables. So every year they compile their own timetables



to take passengers to every station in the country. It takes two people a month's work but has proved so useful that travel agents are now buying copies from the station. They have also collected their own file of useful information such as how long it takes to walk from one Birmingham station to another.

1979 11 27

Cambridge Councillors want British Rail to spend £500,000 on building a footbridge over the railway lines from Rustat Road to the railway station, and also want a footpath from Devonshire Road to the entrance. It would assist many people who currently have to travel long distances and now BR is about to begin electrification they want a commitment to them. But British Rail is opposed to both plans claiming they would bring security problems as well as affecting future land development potential. The high cost is caused by the length of the bridge and the difficulties building it over the mass of rail lines.

**1980**

1980 02 27

Senior dons at Girton are pursuing an astonishing plan to link their college with Cambridge by railway. They are proposing a mono-rail link which would run mainly at ground level on university and college-owned land to the Sidgwick Avenue arts site and University Library. The main difficulties are the high cost of the project, which would need to cross the Huntingdon and Madingley Roads and the delicate negotiations with other colleges. The college's undergraduates have to cycle two miles in all weathers to attend lectures and many have been injured in road accidents. But two recent changes may ensure it is never built: the opening of the Western By-pass has reduced the amount of traffic and there will soon be a cycle lane. 80 02 27

1980 03 13

More details have been released of the amazing project to run a mono-rail between Girton College and Cambridge. The Swiss system employs a steel rail carried on concrete pillars about 20 feet above the ground. Electrically-powered trains carrying 100 people in two 50-seater cars would run five journeys each way at rush hour at a speed of 30 mph. It would do the journey in five minutes. The train would not be obtrusive and would make less noise than a motorcar. The scheme would cost about £500,000 and need a private Act of Parliament. 80 03 13

1980 03 24

Rail transport enthusiasts who want the Cambridge to St Ives branch line re-opened have hired a 10-coach Inter-City train. It will set off from Swavesey station and call at Longstanton, Oakington and Histon before running non-stop to Liverpool Street. The branch line closed to passengers in October 1970 but the track has been kept open by block freight trains carrying Spanish oranges and pulp to Cadburys at Histon and bringing out sand from Amey Roadstone. But the track has recently been lifted beyond Fen Drayton and the station site at St Ives has been obliterated by the new by-pass. 80 03 24

1980 06 06

Girton College's imaginative plan to build a two-mile aerial roadway into Cambridge has been shelved. A driverless 100-seater train would have run 20 feet above ground taking students from the college to Grange Road. But they have had difficulty crossing land owned by other colleges and raising the money and there has been an improvement in traffic conditions since the opening of the Western by-pass 80 06 06a

1980 07 11

A steer escaped from Garnham's meat wholesalers of Coldham's Lane Cambridge while it was on its way to be slaughtered. It jumped from a loading bay and got on to the railway line where it was nearly hit by one train before galloping at full speed towards another. Then it spotted a group of heifers on Stourbridge Common and jumped a four-foot high fence to get into the field. It was finally shot dead by a marksman after being surrounded by squads of police. 80 07 11c

1980 09 02

Cambridge's railway electrification came a step nearer when contractors handed over the shell of the new power signal box near Hills Road Bridge. It will take another 18 months to install the mass of circuitry which will enable a couple of men to control every train, point and signal for miles around. The plan includes floodlit carriage sidings with automatic washing plant for carriages. It is expected to come into operation in May 1982 80 09 02a

1980 09 03

The first football excursion train to leave Cambridge station in almost three years set off for Wolverhampton packed with United fans hoping to cheer John Docherty's men to a place in the third round of the League Cup. The train was one of the first to use the no-alcohol regulation which British Rail hopes will reduce the incidence of vandalism. There was no problem. No matter who they were – schoolboys, skinheads, middle-aged mothers and fathers – no-one tried any surreptitious supping. 80 09 03a

1980 10 03

The new High Speed Train accelerates quickly by railway standards (but not by those of a Mini). And it just keeps on accelerating. At around the 120 mph mark it felt fast. The railway men have padded armchairs but the ride at the guard's end is so bad that BR are contemplating putting the space over to parcels and putting the guards elsewhere. The drivers are dismissive of their skill: powerful engines, powerful brakes, an air-conditioned cab and unrestricted vision make it a bit of a doddle, they say, compared to driving a clapped-out diesel. 80 10 03c

1980 10 10

The Railway Development Society have hired British Rail's experimental railbus, a mustard-yellow Leyland Experimental Vehicle which looks like two buses bolted back to back for trips from Cambridge to Bury St Edmunds. It is an important step in the development of a new generation of cheap, light-weight railcars which could replace the present diesel multiple units. 80 10 10a

1980 12 06

Cambridge railway commuters said goodbye to their two most popular stewards with presents and champagne. British Rail is replacing the three buffet cars and replacing them with micro-buffets and stewards Colin Taylor and Robbie Davidson are resigning. Simon Spanswick of Newport, who fought to save the service, decorated the 20-year-old buffet car with black crepe and Ron Knowles of Horseheath produced a wreath in loving memory. The regulars gathered round the counter and got through quite a lot of drink. 80 12 06

1981 03 13

Services on the Cambridge to St Ives railway line stopped in October 1970 and researchers want to assess the effects of the closure. But they had difficulty tracking down former users, because of the mobility of the Ouse valley towns. The line closed because the populations they served were small and used trains infrequently; in winter they carried only 10 to 20 passengers, most for non-food shopping or visiting families. Most switched to buses which took between 35-79 minutes for the journey, compared to 27 minutes by train. 81 03 13

1981 05 15

Cambridge ecologists say a bus which can run on railway lines is the solution to transport problems in local villages. They plan to borrow a prototype and run it from the city centre to Huntingdon, using British Rail's tracks. It would stop at Mill Road, Chesterton and North Arbury as well as the former stations en route to Swavesey. From this point the tracks have been removed but it would run along the trackbed to St Ives and the Hemingfords. 81 05 15a

1982 08 21

British Rail's controversial plans to install automatic half-barriers at Cherry Hinton level crossing have been rejected. It marks a victory for the large numbers of protestors who considered they would be dangerous so close to two primary schools. Had they been put in residents were prepared to stand on the lines and stop trains. 82 08 21

1982 08 27

City councillors want a full-scale transport complex to give quick interchange for rail and bus passengers on long distance and local services to be sited at the railway station. There is plenty of parking with toilet and refreshment facilities already on hand. The County Council's controversial plans to spend £400,000 on rebuilding Drummer Street bus station would still leave it a cramped site with poor access. 82 08 27

1982 08 31

Cambridge heaved a sigh of relief at the weekend as the 4,000-strong 'invasion' by Chelsea football fans passed off in relative peace. There were 51 arrests and one man needed 27 stitches for a stab wound. But as the last 'soccer special' pulled out of the railway station police were congratulating themselves at preventing a repeat of the violence that flared after the club's previous clash at the Abbey Stadium when fans went on the rampage. Chelsea won 1-0. 82 08 31 & 31aa

1982 12 22

Whenever retired railwayman Bill Last gives a talk on the great love of his life he calls it 'Steam in my Blood'. In 1932 he was employed as an apprentice fitter at Cambridge railway station; it was the beginning of a career which saw the end of steam, the coming of diesel and finally the much-heralded onset of electrification. Now a new book, "55 years of East Anglian Steam", has been dedicated to him. 82 12 22b

1983 01 20

Railway stations at Cambridge, Ely, Newmarket, Audley End, Stansted and Royston could be closed if a Government plan is accepted. Even the electrified Hitchin to Royston line would be abandoned, leaving only the London to Norwich line in East Anglia. Bus services would be provided instead. By cutting BR to the prime Inter-City routes it would be possible to produce an annual profit of £34 million for a 'commercially viable railway'. 83 01 20

1983 06 23

Mill Road bridge rebuilt to allow room for electrification cables [446.14.4]

1983 08 22

£650,000 facelift station, frontage bricks cleaned & restored; new telephone inquiry bureau etc [5.4]

1983 11 19

Richard Spendlove is best known in Cambridge as the announcer at the railway station. But he is also a journalist, TV presenter and historian whose lifetime association with railways is sealed by the fact that he lives in Brickyard Cottage Coldham's Lane, hard up against the railway line. He is also an authority on weapons whose discovery of a Colt Navy percussion revolver is to be the subject of a television documentary. 83 11 19 p9

1984 09 28

British Rail has bowed to public opinion and re-introduced famous name, The Fenman, for its 8.43 am train from Cambridge to London. The name was introduced by the LNER in the 1930s for its premier train on the London – Cambridge – King's Lynn line. It lost its headboards over 20 years ago when electrification came and BR feared drivers might be injured taking them on and off. But everyone went on calling it The Fenman.

1985 03 11

A major shake-up to cope with the forecast massive increase in Cambridge traffic has been unveiled by the County Council. It suggests an underground car park at the Butts Green end of Midsummer Common and a new road following the main railway line with a new bridge over the Cam. There could be reconstruction of a number of major road junctions including East Road - Newmarket Road and at Hyde Park Corner with widening of dual carriageways and new cycleways. A park-and-ride system of new car parks linked to the centre by frequent buses is also proposed 85 03 11

1985 05 07

The new-look Cambridgeshire County Council may descend into political chaos unless a compromise over who works with whom can be worked out. The Liberal SDP Alliance with 26 seats is seeking a three-way administration with the Conservatives (29 seats) or the Labour with 21. But Labour has turned down the Alliance Plan and the Conservatives will agree to power sharing only if the new council accepts their financial policies. Controversial plans to widen East Road have been scrapped as has a railway-road plan which would have destroyed large housing and commercial areas of Cambridge. 85 05 07

1985 06 06

Coleridge Community College art students are being commissioned to brighten up the concrete and metalwork of Mill Road Railway Bridge. They will paint a mural depicting a night-and-day changing scene of Cambridge and Romsey featuring some of the better-known buildings of the area. The City Council hopes it will make people respect the environment more and reduce vandalism. The mural will be coated with special anti-graffiti paint. 85 06 06

1985 06 14

The controversial 'railway-route' road plan for Cambridge has been killed off for the second time in 10 years. It was intended to relieve traffic & would have run around the southern and eastern outskirts of the city, following the main railway line. Ten years ago Conservative county councillors discovered it would have cost millions of pounds to build and destroy at least 100 houses. Their revival of the plan earlier this year caused a furious outcry: they were swept from control at the recent elections and admit it was one of the main factors in their downfall 85 06 14

1985 09 27

Cambridge Cattle Market opened 100 years ago. Before 1885 it was held at Castle End but the stalls were inadequate for the number of beasts. Then Jesus College provided land near the railway station. Cattle docks from all four railways were within two minutes' walk and there were direct railway links to Scotland and Ireland. There are still weekly sales of stock, with horse sales every five weeks, but the area nearby that was used for grazing is now the Clifton Industrial Estate. It is filled with large corrugated boxes housing a wide variety of light industry and a 'Park and Ride' site 85 09 27

1986 02 01

Cherry Hinton railway crossing protest – 86 02 01

1986 02 06

British Rail's new Sprinter multiple unit has uprated suspension, tinted windows and new livery. With their improved sound proofing, modern décor, heating systems and facilities for the disabled they are being introduced to replace existing units which are over 25 years old. The new service should encourage more people to use trains and ease pressure on the county's overloaded roads between Peterborough and Cambridge 86 02 06

1987 01 19

History was made in Cambridge as the first electric trains arrived and departed at the station, although passengers travelling on the new-style trains seemed unaware of their historic first-day journey. The electrification has cost £10 million with a further £20 million being spent on resigning and improvements, and the main line from Cambridge to London was completed four months ahead of

schedule. The operations manager said electrification was not yet fully implemented and electric engines would not be introduced until May 87 01 19

1987 02 24

Electric trains speed service – 87 02 24b

1987 02 24

Cambridge station is receiving a major facelift. As the service changes from diesel-hauled locomotives to more environmentally-acceptable Electric Multiple Units, the last vestiges of the steam trains – which disappeared in the early 60s – have been scrubbed away. The smoky grime of those decades has gone as the whole building received a sandblasted clean-up. The bright brickwork now reveals sets of the heraldic crests of the colleges that were part of the original building in 1845. These have also been restored and crests of those colleges formed since then are being added. 87 02 24a #

1987 03 06

Commuters are suffering from a culture shock say British Rail chiefs who have set out to defend their newly-electrified service between Cambridge and London. Since trial runs began in January, complaints have poured in. The electric trains have disappointed many passengers who are used to a spacious inter-city style service. They say the new carriages are cramped with little luggage space, small seats and no tables. Yet BR is faced with a surge in passengers – especially during the rush hour – and can only cope in this way, even if it means making the quality of the ride slightly less comfortable - 87 03 06

1987 03 23

A new style electric train took just 47 minutes to travel from London to Cambridge breaking the previous speed record of 55 minutes set by a steam loco in the late 1950s. The train brought a group of VIPs to the city for a ceremony to mark the opening of a £650,000 revamp to the railway station. There are new offices and lavatories together with a telephone inquiry bureau while outside the forecourt paving has been extended and trees planted. It is part of a bid to improve train services, which includes electrification of the line to Royston 87 03 23

1987 06 01

A young man became a human torch in a horrific accident at Cambridge station. He had been at a party in Hooper Street when he climbed over the fence separating the garden from the railway, crossed the tracks and climbed to the top of a carriage. Seconds later terrified party guests heard a huge explosion as he was struck by a massive electric shock from the overhead cables. Two others were badly burned when they went to help. All are lucky to have survived 87 06 01

1987 09 18

The Cambridge - St Ives railway line could be reopened to passengers and linked with Stansted as part of a major new project. The service, shut for nearly 20 years, would be launched with a show-piece electric service along the 14-mile line which is at present only used by freight trains. There would be three new stations at the Science Park, Coldham's Lane and Long Road. Other stations would be built or reopened, under plans announced by the County council, including Chittering, Fulbourn and Cherry Hinton. 87 09 18a

1987 10 27

An overhead cable car system between St Ives and Cambridge has been suggested by the Willingham-based Alternative Transport Society as an alternative option to a rail link. There would be a lack of noise and fumes and cables would be high enough over level crossings, eliminating congestion. It would have simple platforms for alighting with cars slowed automatically by computer control and the total all-weather system would ensure safe and reliable transport. But opponents describe it as a non-starter and just pie in the sky. 87 10 27b

1987 12 18

Cherry Hinton level crossing is being restored by volunteers at the Museum of Technology in Cheddars Lane, Cambridge. The aim is to resite the crossing somewhere in the area on private land. Former mayor John Woodhouse, who has campaigned against British Rail replacing the gates with automatic barriers will be asked to perform the opening ceremony 87 12 18

1988 01 07

A new railway station designed to ease Cambridge's worsening transport problems could be sited near the A10 at Milton, says British Rail. No costs for the 'Cambridge Parkway' halt have yet been worked out but BR would almost certainly look for cash from the community to build the new station and car park. Last year the City and County Councils provided £125,000 help pay for new crossing gates at Cherry Hinton 88 01 07c

1988 02 17

Three new railway stations at Cherry Hinton, Fulbourn and the Chittering area have been suggested in a County council report. But stations at Harston, Offord and Soham have been rejected on grounds of cost. British Rail plans to build a new 'parkway' station to the north of Cambridge to meet growing commuter passenger growth. But calls to re-open the Cambridge to St Ives freight line to passengers are firmly ruled out. It would cost £4.84 million, greatly outweighing potential income, consultants say 88 02 17

1988 04 22

Cambridge to Royston goes electric. Gala day on Bank Holiday Monday with personal appearance by TV personality Gary Wilmot, live music, exhibit of railway rolling stock and special shuttle service of electric trains free to everyone on the day between Cambridge and Royston. 88 04 22

1988 10 18

Cambridge may have a city-wide high-speed monorail system linking with all nearby villages allowing shoppers to leave their cars at home and travel high above the traffic jams. It could be expensive to set up but would have low running costs and be reliable. Eight years ago dons at Girton College came up with a plan for a monorail to link it with the university quarter but nothing ever came of it. The County Council has already commissioned experts to consider a light railway system linked to the proposed park-and-ride system 88 10 18a

1989 01 20

Seasoned commuters on the Cambridge line will go to almost any lengths to avoid catching the 'cattle-truck' electric 321 multiple-unit trains to London. Even being crammed on to the older locomotive-hauled trains is preferable. "There are just two carriages where you can smoke on the 8am train from Cambridge; every day I have to stand, nothing ever happens when you complain", said one regular traveller. Many will either work late or go for a drink at the end of the day to catch the 6.35pm locomotive-hauled train. Life will be only marginally better when the new electric units come into full operation, seating will still be cramped, there will be no tables for people to work, no buffer, no phones and not enough first class seats, some claim. 89 01 20a

1989 02 08

Rail electrification to Kings Lynn announced by end 1991. House prices to soar following electrification of railway line – 89 02 08

1989 03 09

Railway cuts of Beeching era – feature 89 03 09b & c, 89 03 10a

1989 04 24

British Rail is planning a second Cambridge railway station, provisionally known as Cambridge Parkway, close to Milton and the A45 northern bypass. It is unlikely to be ready in time for the start of electrification services to King's Lynn in October 1991, but could follow shortly afterwards. However the site needs much better access and provision of parking space. It would serve the high-

tech Science Park and provide a way for commuters to join trains without having to struggle through the city. 89 04 24

1989 05 17

A light railway may be built, with private cash, linking the centre of Cambridge with the main line station on the outskirts. It could form a part of an extensive park-and-ride network based on a light railway system around the northern and eastern industrial sections of the city. County Councillors have also asked experts to consider building a gigantic car park under the Butts Green end of Midsummer Common. A new road system to relieve the heavily congested areas of Milton Road and Elizabeth Way are also being examined to sort out the growing traffic chaos quickly 89 05 17

1989 06 09

Cambridgeshire's new traffic chief has vowed to end Cambridge's traffic and parking chaos within four years. A 'grand traffic management plan' will be drafted by officials and meetings arranged with business bosses. He wants a better road system to serve the industrial quarters, a new light railway system linked to a park-and-ride scheme and a possible car park under Midsummer Common. 89 06 09

1989 09 14

Rail commuters banned from taking bikes on peak-hour trains – 89 09 14

1989 10 03

A light railway system running in a tunnel under Midsummer Common is the latest official suggestion to help solve traffic problems in the centre of Cambridge. It would be an alternative to a line running down a widened section of Newmarket Road. The underground railway would link with a number of other lines from surrounding villages as far out as Fenstanton and terminate at a station in Malcolm Street. The County Council will invest £60,000 to see if a car park under Midsummer Common is feasible and another £150,000 in a feasibility study for a 60-mph light rail system. 89 10 03a

1989 10 04

Jim Paice, MP, has launched a bid to reopen the Cambridge to St Ives branch railway and extend it to link with the East Coast main line at Huntingdon. He says it could reduce traffic on the heavily-congested A604. Enthusiasts packed British Rail 'specials' up and down the 14-mile line which is normally used by just one freight train a day carrying mineral workings from Fen Drayton; it is also used occasionally by Chivers jam company. 89 10 04b

1989 11 28

The new South East Cycleway from Market Square to Cherry Hinton follows quiet back roads, avoiding the nightmarish Mill Road which can reduce cyclists to a nervous wreck. It includes a new £2million bridge across the railway near Cambridge station. This is a striking structure with a triangular tower from which cables support a cycle and walkway fully protected from the elements by a transparent polycarbonate tube. It is thought to be the longest bridge of its type in Western Europe. 89 11 28a, 29

1990 03 12

A major new railway station could be built behind Cambridge Business Park. It would become the main station for Cambridge with the original one becoming just a stop-over point– 90 03 12

1990 03 24

Hundreds of people swamped the first passenger train between Swavesey and Cambridge for 20 years and at least 200 were left standing. The special service, chartered by the Railway Development Society was overwhelmed. There were 500 waiting at Swavesey, 100 at Longstanton, 200 at Oakington and another 100 at Histon. The train arrived at Cambridge station more than 20 minutes late. 90 03 24b 90 03 26a

1990 06 23

Cambridge to Swavesey railway line – support for reinstatement; special train – 90 06 23a

1990 09 07

Light railway system to beat traffic chaos would cost £100m – 90 09 07

1990 10 17

More buses, a cycling scheme and shop-to-home delivery service suggested as ways solving Cambridge traffic; light railway is not answer says Prof Plowden – 90 10 17a